

THE PETTY SCOTS NOVEL

by

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THE 'PETTY' SCOTS NOVEL.

I

INTRODUCTION.

'I was informed that Scottish novels would not succeed,¹⁾ (Waverley was not then published)', writes John Galt in The Literary Life, 'and', he continues, 'in consequence, I threw the manuscript aside.' (1813).

Years later, (in 1821) this neglected Ms. appeared in the pages of Blackwood's Magazine as that perfect expression of Scottish vernacular prose fiction - 'The Annals of the Parish'.

What influence had wrought the great change in the taste and temper of the reading public in the interval? The answer, suitably enough, lies with the Wizard, as he was called - Sir W. Scott. All prejudice, in the South, against the singular barbarity of a 'Scottish' label, in the North, against the potential levity of the novel form, melted away before the enchantment of the Waverley Novels. Here was high romance in the pomp of Augustan English; but here too was the 'birr and smeddum' of the Scots tongue. Polite readers became reconciled to the latter; heard with calmness, even with relish, the new and enchanting voice. For the first time, the vernacular was made popular, because it was used by a master, sparingly, and with great artistry to focus spotlight on character, to hint the setting.

Hitherto /

1.) The Literary Life. Vol. I. p. 153.

Hitherto, no one (since the 17th century diaries of Melville, Lauderdale and Johnston of Warriston) had raised the vernacular to the dignity of serious prose. The abounding vigour and gusto of the Doric had been directed, naturally enough, to comic and burlesque verse. For their more elevated studies, mediaeval scholiasts, like Gavin Douglas, John of Ireland, and later, in the early 16th century, Bellenden the translator of Livy, who should have been laying the foundations of a literary vernacular, turned to their beloved 'lateen tong'. The syntax of their native language became alien to them, Scottish matter, outside the provenance of Latin, was neglected, and Scotsmen rarely expressed themselves in the vernacular unless to apologise for the barbarian.

Until 1549, the date of the appearance of "The Complaint of Scotland" written in the rhitoriqueur language of the 15th century, and even after this, as in the writings of George Buchanan (1506-82) Scots scholars turned their eager gaze on humanist studies, but not in order to naturalise the various forms in their mother tongue as the English did. Hence there was never, as in the neighbouring land, any healthy experimentation; and so, there was no sense of the continuity of Scottish prose, which, when it occurred sporadically, was largely given up to homily and polemic.

When it did appear at the end of the 18th century, almost a hundred years after the first English experiments in the novel, the Scots novel sprang fully formed to life. There was /

was no gradual evolution of the form as in the South, where translations, essays, and letters had prepared the way for sure characterisation, and where a full-blooded theatre had contributed a sense of movement and a realism essential to the novel.

The Bible and Shakespeare, forming the great common background of the English writing and reading public, were sadly misused or neglected in Scotland. First of all, the Bible until 1579 was an English version, and though this was a rich store-house from which all could draw, and the sonorous fervour of the Old Testament, not alien to the Scot's temper, its inspiration had been used by the Kirk to blast and not to encourage a profane culture. 'We will tell you yet of a greater abomination than this, though little minded or laid to heart by many, and that is, turning over this Holy Bible to Stage Plays. Is not this horrid blasphemy?', says Kirkpatrick Sharpe in 1661. Under the influence of such Puritanic severity, no permanent theatre could flourish; vital contact with the European Renaissance through Shakespeare was thus unhappily denied to the Scots. The first record of any performance of Shakespeare's plays in Scotland, appears in the account book of Sir John Foulis Bart. of Ravelstoun, in an entry as late as the year 1677:- 'Payed for myselfe, my wife and Cristian to see Macbeth acted, and for sweetmeats for Lady Colingtraive, Lade Margaret Mackenzie and others'.

There was however, none of that enthusiastic study of Shakespeare or of the Elizabethan dramatists, which became in /

in the pages of Richardson and Fielding 'a prime motivating
¹⁾
 force behind the English novel'.

As for native produced drama, there was little between the mediaeval allegory of Sir David Lyndsay's Satire of the
²⁾
 Three Estates "playit afoir the Queenis Grace" in 1539, and the Rev. John Home's fustian Douglas tragedy of 1755, which, mild though it was, as if to crown the challenge provoked by Sir David Lyndsay, set the General Assembly about the worthy man's ears.

That there would have been a public for drama despite the Kirk Session is obvious, for since the days of the 'Guisards' mentioned in Boethius' 'Scotorum Historia', the Scots had loved entertainments and spectacles. The Minutes of the Town Council of Edinburgh, 23rd October 1717, give the information that 'the theatre kept in the Magazine under Parliament House which is used on days of rejoicing is very much broke through frequent nailing. A handsome jointed scaffold to be made, requiring no nails'.

The Principal and Professors of the University however, as well as the Kirk, were resolutely set against the licentious acting of stage plays likely to attract 'the vicious relish of the multitude'.

But the real failure of the drama in Scotland was
 as /

1) B.A. Booth. John Galt - a Study in Scottish Vernacular Fiction - Introduction. P. 3.

2) The Annals of the Edinburgh Stage - J.C. Dibdin, Edinburgh - p 17. Richard Cameron - 1888.

as much due to lack of literary experiment in the native tongue, for drama is the boldest and most individual of the arts and Scottish practice was slight and lacking in confidence.

The realism that should have come from a national theatre to inspire writers of serious prose, was driven underground, to flourish, unworthily for the most part, in the fabliau literature of the people, in the vernacular prose of the chap books that sold by their 200,000 copies a year,¹⁾ as did for example, those of the 'Skellat' Glasgow Bellman, Dugald Graeme. Yet this asset was not lost even here, for John Galt, who has been called the founder of the Scottish realistic novel, knowing the chapbook heroes in his youth, realised the value of the vernacular for narrative, and there is evidence in his writings of the influence of Leper the Tailor and others.

A peasantry subsisting on the 'mixty-maxy' of the chapbooks for its literature, is sharply divided from the small literary coteries of the town. Perhaps one of the greatest stumbling blocks of all to the early development of prose fiction in Scotland was the lack of a coherent public to sustain and enjoy it. In the early 18th century, the great period which saw the masterpieces of Richardson and Fielding, England under the Hanoverians settled down to an era of stable government and to political and industrial expansion. Literature had had its efflorescences and reactions to them, the Elizabethans followed by the Puritans, the Restoration by the new Age of Reason, and enriched /

1) Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century - Henry Grey Graham, London - Adam and Charles Black, 1901. p.190

enriched by all experience and tempered by all trials, the continuity of English letters persisted.

Society now was urban; men and women of fashion and intellect clustered in the court and in the cities that rose on the commerce and progress of a new age, chiefly in the great metropolis of London, which shed its wit and beauty at stated seasons prescribed by fashion and the climate, to the health resorts of Bath, Tunbridge Wells and Scarborough. Men thronging in coffee houses, assemblies, routs, had leisure to take stock of each other, to note adherence to or deviation from a defined standard of behaviour, which, hardened by time, became rigid convention. Young noblemen went on the Grand Tour to the continent, chiefly to France, whence came 'vast French romances bound in gilt'. Sophistication was in the air, shadowed by boredom. To dispel ennui, came gossip and intrigue: it was not far from the spoken to the written plot. Yet amid the 'Atalantis' scandals (appearing in the fashionable novel of that name, by Mrs Manley, and only thinly disguising political libel) came the discreet voice of Addison, whose art was a pointer for the first great masters of the English novel, Richardson, and Fielding.

II

But the Northern neighbour was not to see a novel enshrining its national manners till the end of the century.

The Union of 1707 found Scotland far from being consolidated: it bore the scars of private feud, of civil brawl, and /

and of bitter religious persecution: it began the century with hot resentment against its yoke-fellow: it was the 'yuillis yald' in the team, broken in many services.

The population was meagre and scattered; in the remote Hebrides and among the barren moors of the Highlands, a people subsisted in serflike drudgery under its feudal chiefs; a people, pagan at heart, devout enough in Kirk observances, but still kindling hearths from the Beltane fires.

In the Lowlands, treeless plains, a soil starved by the continual sowing of the same crops, viz. gray oats and 'bere', barely sustained a population sullen because of the 'hungry years'; who dragged in sledges or bore in creels on their backs, loads too heavy for their emaciated horses, along tracks impassable to carts. And on the Sabbath rose the 'drant' of the preacher, wrestling with the Devil, but not with the one that most afflicted his people, the Devil of ignorance and sloth.

The remainder of the population was congregated in the small but rising Glasgow, in the capital, in Dundee and in Aberdeen. Indeed, it was only in these cities, that a writer could appeal to a stabilised society on familiar ground. Life in Edinburgh surged in the densely packed, dimly lit 'lands' of the High Street, and throve on the peculiar intimacy which proximity fostered between Law-Lords and caddies, duchesses and oyster wives, when a 'periwige' maker was kinsman to a lord. Life was colourful, picturesque, and dirty. There was a special /

special savour about those old Edinburgh days.

Between 1770-80, however, a great transformation in the city life took place. Earlier, before the mid-century, in order to relieve congestion, New Street and St. John Street had been built, diverging from the Canongate but even this new accomodation was found to be insufficient. Space had to be found for the establishment of an Exchange, the housing of public records, and for a site for the Advocates' Library. In 1763, the North Loch was drained and on October 21st of that year, was laid the foundation stone of the North Bridge. This was completed in 1772. A huge rampart of earth, composed of building refuse, still called "the Mound", gave additional access to the New Town in 1768. The magistrates having obtained an Act allowing for the northward extension of the town, accepted the plan of James Craig, nephew of the poet Thomson, for streets and squares. By 1791, the New Town had extended from the Register House to Castle Street and the beginnings of the exodus of gentlefolk from the old town to elegant flats and houses in the new Princes, George and Queen Street, had begun.

Innovations of comfort and refinement, too, made their appearance in the larger cities; in 1783, 1,000 cranenecked carriages were ordered to be sent to Edinburgh from Paris; new fashions were devised by the mantua maker and were paraded in the cool of the evening on Glasgow Green; the silversmiths, shoemakers and haberdashers became increasingly ingenious; dinners of two courses appeared on the table; self-contained houses /

houses sprang up along the new roads.

It was natural that the great expansion of the Capital and the sudden increase in material comfort should be accompanied by the improvement in communications; and in fact an important artery for commerce and navigation in the Forth and Clyde canal was opened on July 28th 1790.

With the expansion of the cities came a corresponding expansion of mind; contact with the outside world was sought. Edinburgh gradually emerged from the confines of provincialism. Centuries ago, Scotsmen had been accomplished and hardy travellers as wandering scholars, like the redoubtable Crichton, or sturdy mercenaries, at the universities and courts of Europe. Now it was as if they had resumed their natural right of easy foreign intercourse after a cessation of centuries, so that Gibbon was to comment of the famous philosopher and historian 'The inimitable beauties¹⁾ of Hume's style were condemned as not English, but French'.

This change for the better in town-life, was accompanied by momentous changes in the countryside. Simmering resentment against the Hanoverian government had its outlet in the '45 rebellion, the spirit of which passed into the Jacobite songs and poetry, to linger on as a sentimental memory. The defeat of Prince Charles was also the defeat of a stagnating feudalism. A Disarming Act turned vassals into independent tacksmen proud of their holdings. The Turnpike Act of 1751 ensured the maintenance of good roads and communication, while the /

1) Scottish Men of Letters, Henry Grey Graham, p.44.

the Montgomery Act of 1770 foreshadowed vast improvement in enclosing, draining, building and planting of entailed estates.

There were social drawbacks to these improvements: the patriarchal character of Highland chiefs disappeared with their right of pit and gallows, a sign of decay which was later to excite the compassion and interest of the Scots novelist, Susan Ferrier. Enclosures spelled ruination to small-holders, causing widespread emigration of good stock - a fact commented on by the great English visitor, Dr. Johnson himself, and plaintively lamented in the famous Boatsong of the exiles.

Many forfeited rebel estates however, were split up and bought by farmers who had profited by their new husbandry, which in time made Scottish agriculture a model for its Southern neighbour. "More estates have been bought lately in the district round Perth by farmers than by any other class of men. Many estates particularly have been purchased by Carse farmers." ¹⁾

This new husbandry was a direct outcome of the union with England in 1707. Free commerce with the southern Kingdom encouraged a revolution in agriculture, which was part of the swift change in economic life called the Industrial Revolution.

In the agricultural sphere, there was first of all a stimulated interest in the cattle trade owing to the possibility of new English markets. Stock farming was added by the introduction of new crops like artificial grasses, clover, ²⁾ turnips, "which cleansed the soil more effectually than fallowing", and /

1) Hall's Travels. i p. 265.

2) Maxwell - "Practical Husbandman" 1751 - p. 342.

and potatoes, though, according to Thomas Somerville in "My Own Life and Times", none of the latter were planted in open fields before 1768. The turnip, too, though introduced in 1716 was long considered as a luxury. In Humphrey Clinker (Smollet's novel) turnips are described as "whets" at dinner-parties, and even as late as 1774 farmers in Dumbartonshire would not sow them, though bribed to do so.

However, the county of Galloway in particular, took to rearing cattle for the English market, and better-fed cattle were imported from Ireland in order to remedy the depreciation of stock caused by constant herding, mixture of breeds and want of hay. No longer were emaciated cattle starved on the meagre grazing of the "outfield" common to several tenants.

Many farmers proceeded to "park" or enclose their lands. To begin with, this fencing was bitterly resisted by the people: mobs of men and women in Galloway attacked the enclosures with pitchforks and stakes, and, even more serious, "houghers" maimed the cattle, but despite all set-backs, stock-farming flourished and with the coming of steam navigation in the 20's of the 19th century, the long journey on foot to Norfolk was obviated;¹⁾ cattle could be fattened at home and shipped from Aberdeen and other ports direct to London".

Sheep-rearing was not developed on a large scale till about the year 1800. Farmers from the south drove their Cheviot and Linton breeds north to the counties of Sutherland, Ross and Inverness-shire /

1) The Economic Evolution of Scotland, p. 7. by H. Hamilton.

Inverness-shire and soon extensive areas of these counties were turned into sheep-walks. The evil of this lay in intensifying emigration which was also induced by the high rents for small holdings.

Sheep-rearing had a beneficial effect on the woollen industry and the great Inverness Wool Fair of 1817 was sponsored by farmers from the Northern counties, and manufacturers from Aberdeen and from the great woollen industry centres of Yorkshire. In the Lowlands, sheep-rearing developed also, so that in the early 19th century the manufacture of woollen cloth made some progress.

With regard to arable land, in the first half of the 18th century, the type of agriculture which was most widely practised in Scotland was still that of the township farm. The infield or homeland was cultivated by several tenants in alternate "rigs" or ridges, of which there might be seven or eight in a small field; and though each of these tenants had his own share of the live-stock, the outfield, which consisted mainly of natural grass, was common to all¹⁾. This system was called "run-rig" cultivation. The crops were oats and bear (barley) but the ridges too often changed hands to allow of their soil being improved. Moreover the meadow was too moist or too rocky to be ploughed by the cumbersome Scots plough with its team of ten or twelve oxen.

A good omen for Scottish farming however was the gradually

1) Mathieson, p. 277. "The Awakening of Scotland".

gradually awakening interest of intelligent men in agriculture. In 1723, the Honourable the Society of Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture was formed, and from this date can be traced the introduction of improvements, chiefly in East Lothian, such as the enclosing, the culture of turnip and clover aforementioned, and fallowing. Round about the year 1760 also, run-rig cultivation became displaced by tenure of a single tenant to whom land was let on long lease. Under these conditions, he bound himself to adopt methods of fencing, manuring, sowing of grass, and rotation of crops.

Though rents rose, better agricultural implements were introduced, including a modern plough drawn by a single team; fanners, barley-mills and after 1786, thrashing mills also appeared. Farming benefited too by greater ease in transport of produce in carts along good roads. Acreage under cereal crops was greatly extended during the Napoleonic Wars and when Cobbet visited the Lothians in 1832, he found a degree of capitalist farming unequalled in any part of Great Britain.

In Ayrshire, new ideas of agriculture resulted in a dairy produce industry. "But the chief dependence of the farmer in these quarters, for paying his rent, or for increasing his wealth, was upon the produce of the dairy, significantly called his 'milkness'".

"Who has not heard accordingly of Dunlop cheese of its peculiar value, its richness and its sweetness," ¹⁾ writes the Rev. Dr. J. Mitchell. The good minister goes on to describe the disappointment /

1) Rev. Dr. J. Mitchell. "Memories of Ayrshire". P. 271.

disappointment of the farmer's family who were denied a share of the rich produce, even the milk being carefully skimmed that "the butter might be more abundant, the return in cash larger and more boastful". In fact the zeal of the countryside was up.

Even those who held grounds which usually extended from 30 to 50 acres and were technically called "lairds" - "commonly cultivated the soil with their own hands, assisted by their own family, or by a servant or servants hired for the purpose".¹⁾

Dr. Alexander Carlyle in his diary quotes Ambassador Keith as complaining that the Scottish lairds "could talk of nothing but dung and bullocks", and "that portion of them who had good sense with their minds enlarged and their manners improved, found themselves better employed in remaining at home and cultivating their fields."²⁾

The clergy too were not backward in example: in fact some glebes were small model farms. Throughout Ridpath of Stichel's diary, there are regularly recurring glimpses of that active man working in his glebe, perhaps trimming the glebe hedge when visitors arrive, and frequently there is an entry like the following:- 1755 Friday October 17th

"Planted my tulips and ranunculuses tho' the ground is rather too wet, yet did not care to delay it longer."

But /

1) Memoirs of Ayrshire p. 268

2) 1764. p. 481

But the most enlightened research in Scots agriculture was carried out by the upper classes: many persons of titled rank were members of the Honourable the Society of Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture, and men like Thomas, 6th Earl of Haddington, who introduced artificial grasses, Cockburn of Ormiston, who extended leases and experimented in the sowing of turnip in drills on his model estate, Mr. Barclay of Ury who transformed his barren Kincardineshire property and Lord Gardenstone are only a few of the great pioneers. Professional men like "potatoe" Wilkie, the Law-Lords Kames, Drummond and Auchinleck are only a few notables, who employed their extraordinary talents in experimenting on their country estates amid the guffaws and headshaking of their tenants. Lockhart, in a miabile mood as Dr. Peter Morris, described Jeffrey, the renowned editor of the Edinburgh Review, thus in his leisure hours at Craigneuk:- "for I had no sooner arrived, than he insisted upon carrying me over his ditches and hedges to shew me his method of farming; and indeed talked of Swedish turnip, and Fiorin grass and redblossomed potatoes - " ¹⁾ .

Country lads who rose into commerce, and their numbers are phenomenal in this age, never forgot the soil from which they sprang. There emerged therefore, a sturdy parochial society to be described in the social novel of John Galt and others.

Though agriculture was controlled by the leisured class, "the progress which had been made by the commerce and manufactures" /

1) "Peters Letters to his Kinsfolk" P. 65. Vol. 1.

manufactures of Scotland during this period must be ascribed¹⁾ mainly to the prompting of an enlightened self-interest."

After the Union of the Parliaments in 1707, merchants became aware of new possibilities in commerce, through the removal of tariff barriers between England and Scotland, and through the fact that the English Navigation Acts now operated in their favour. Therefore the period from 1707-80 saw rapid commercial expansion, an essential preliminary to industrial development.

Almost at once, trade which had previously been conducted between the east coast and the Baltic ports, was directed to the West of Scotland and by the year 1735, there were 67 vessels of an aggregate tonnage of 5,600 tons belonging to and trading from the Clyde. Of these, one third were engaged in trade with the American colonies. Tobacco was the main import, and the speed with which this commercial enterprise developed was phenomenal. The tobacco trade was a great mercantile adventure; the tobacco lords of Glasgow appear as figures of romance in the prosaic annals of commerce:- "they distinguished themselves by a particular garb, being attired like their Venetian and Genoese predecessors, in scarlet cloaks,²⁾ curled wigs, cocked hats, and bearing gold-headed canes".

In time, these acute business men, instead of sending supercargoes to barter goods for tobacco, set up resident agents in the Plantations: thus some well-known Glasgow families, like the /

1) "The Awakening of Scotland" Mathieson, p. 281.

2) John Strang 's "Glasgow and its Clubs!" or Glimpses of the Condition, Manners, Characters and Oddities of the City, during the past and present centuries. p. 35 Glasgow, 1864.

the Dunlops and Buchanans early established American connections.

By the time of the American War of Independence in 1776, shipping from the Clyde area to the Plantations had increased to 386 vessels of an aggregate tonnage of 22,896 tons. Of the tobacco imported from the colonies, only a small proportion was withheld for home consumption: for example in 1771, total imports valued £1,386,329, re-exports, only £503,473. Most of the tobacco was shipped to France, but this tobacco trade provided, through the capital raised, valuable impetus¹⁾ for the setting up of industry on a large scale.

At the beginning of the century, even by the year 1743, as Dr. Alexander Carlyle remarks, "manufacturers were in their infancy" and "there were not sufficient to supply an outward-bound cargo for Virginia."²⁾

Perhaps this deficiency was in some measure due to the lifting of the tariff barriers with England in 1707, for this had proved harmful to most Scots industries save linen. Indeed it was only in the period 1780-1830, when the mechanic genius of the Scots found outlet in the invention of machinery, that Scottish industries, particularly the linen industry, were on a par with the English ones, and could compete in output, through the gradual adoption of the factory system as opposed to domestic spinning and weaving.

In /

1) The Econ. Evol. of Scotland in the 18th and 19th centuries.
H. Hamilton p. 4.

2) Dr. Alexander Carlyle's Autobiography p. 80-1. ed.
J.H. Burton, 1910.

In the early period of 1707-1780 there was shown some desire to build up the linen industry as a rival to the great English woollen industry, and two factors assisted this project; firstly, there was, up to the time of the American War, (1776) a stable overseas market in the Plantations, and secondly, because of the stirring of some feeling for political reform in Scotland, the Convention of Royal Burghs induced Parliament to stimulate the industry by passing two Acts in 1727 for "the Better Regulation of the Linen and Hempen Manufacturers in Scotland". These Acts prescribed certain standard lengths and breadths and ordered that all linen offered for sale should be inspected and stamped. A Board of Trustees for Manufacturers was set up with certain annual funds at its disposal to encourage agriculture, manufactures and fishing; £2,650 for linen, £2,650 for fisheries, and the balance of £700 for coarse wool.

Thus before power-driven machinery was introduced, the linen industry made great progress. The following figures are significant:- in 1730 officers of the above-mentioned Board stamped 3,755,622 yards of linen for sale; in 1770 this amount¹⁾ had increased to 13,049,535 yards.

The progress of this linen industry was closely bound with that of agriculture for in almost every county of Scotland, spinning and weaving were domestic "by-employments", and farmers were encouraged to grow flax with their other crops. Premiums for growing lint and hemp-seed amounted to £1,500 and £200 was spent /

1) Hist. Assoc. Leaflet No. 91. "The Economic Evolution of Scotland". H. Hamilton. p. 6.

spent in prizes to housewives for the best piece of cloth. The establishment of spinning schools, improved bleach-fields, the introduction of new appliances for the preparatory processes of scutching and heckling, and the development of the coarse linen trade were other constructive efforts of the Board.

The natural outcome of these efforts was an increase of the capitalistic system. Finishing processes like bleaching, which required capital and technical knowledge, became impossible for the individual to do and were localised in the big works at Perth and the Vale of Leven. The majority of spinners and weavers came to be employed in the chief towns by merchants like Duncan Grant, who in 1763 had employed spinners and weavers all over the northern counties from the Great Glen to Aberdeenshire.

But in the tale of the driving force of this powerful industry, amid the host of shrewd and prosperous merchants there is a tragic figure and that is the weaver himself. Between 1736-42 the situation for him had become desperate. British merchants who received back most of the import duty when they re-exported Austrian and German linen to America, were able to undersell Scots linen. Scots towns from Paisley to Aberdeen sent petitions to Parliament and the Convention of Royal Burghs and the Board of Manufacturers were agents in procuring a bounty of one penny per yard upon all linens worth between fourpence and one shilling per yard. In 1753 this was withdrawn with the result that 56,000 workers and 8,000 looms were out of employment. The bounty was renewed and remained in force till 1832 when the mercantile policy was definitely replaced by laissez-faire theories.

By this date, 1832, the position of the weaver had changed and this change had a profound effect on social history. At the start of the 18th century, the weaver had been a rural worker, who, like a mediaeval craftsman worked up his customer's raw materials - some continued to do this till well into the 19th century. As the industry developed, weavers began to buy the yarn from women or merchants and to sell the webs themselves. Business tended to centre in towns and the weavers residing there became wholetime workers at the loom. By the end of the century, these weavers were nearly all employed by the merchants who sold the webs and often supervised the whole process from the preparation of the flax to the making of the finished cloth, so that by the 19th century, the linen industry was under capitalist control. By this time too, linen was becoming superseded by cotton. The laissez-faire policy had its effect on the industry. Apart from the aforementioned stoppage of bounties in 1832, officers of the Board of Manufactures were denied their right of inspecting the mills in 1806, and in 1814 the stamping of linen was disallowed. By 1823, Parliament had entirely abolished the supervising power of the Board.

The power loom too was gradually displacing the handloom, workers barely earned a pittance. On the other hand, the fortunes of the merchants or manufacturers as they were called, were in the ascendant. "They had no expensive plant to maintain and were able to cut the wages of the scattered and uncombined¹⁾ weavers to starvation point". Nor were they naturally eager under /

1) I.F. Grant. Economic History of Scotland. p. 227.

under these circumstances to adopt the power-loom to the weaving of linen. An instance of this chariness is revealed by the fact that by 1845 in Forfarshire, which specialized in the coarser fabrics most suitable for power-loom weaving, 3,000 hand-loom weavers were still employed.

And the weavers themselves had no redress. Although they had been described as mediaeval craftsmen at the beginning of the century, there was no similarity between mediaeval guilds and modern Trade Unions. There were local friendly societies producing "bedfast and walking alimant" but any attempt on the part of the weavers for improved conditions or fixed "table of prices" was met by employers with an old act of 1617 (renewed¹⁾ in 1661) empowering justices to fix maximum wages.

Sometimes the bitterness of the weavers found outlet in violence; in 1787 webs of non-strikers were destroyed in riots and some ring-leaders were killed by the military. The sedentary work and gradual congregation of the weavers in towns bred discussion among them of the foundations on which their social order rested. Though the Government had spies everywhere in the country at the time of the French Revolution, (1792), Thomas Paine's pamphlet "The Rights of Man" was openly hawked in the cities. At the same time the harvest failed and famine swept the industrial districts. No help was forthcoming from the Evangelist religion which uniformly preached obedience towards /

2) W.H. Marwick Reprint from the International Review - 1938 -
 "The Beginnings of the Scottish Working Class Movement".
 p. 3. edited by the International Institute for Social
 History, - Amsterdam, Leiden - E.J.Brill, 1938.

towards employers. In these circumstances, it was no wonder that Friends of the People Societies were formed in Scotland, and that Botany Bay tragedies closed the career of the early political martyrs, for the judges united with the landlord class in suppressing what they feared.

Thomas Muir, a young Edinburgh advocate, was one of the most eloquent and fearless of agitator leaders, and he toured the weaving districts, addressing mobs at Kirkintilloch, Kilmarnock, Paisley, Lennoxtown and numerous other places. At his trial, when cited for sedition, and as a fugitive from justice, he presented a bold, even noble, front. The notorious Lord Braxfield in summing up from the Bench is reported to have spoken thus of the weavers:-

"Multitudes of ignorant weavers Mr. Muir might have known that no attention could be paid to such a rabble. What right had they to representation? I could have told them that Parliament would never listen to their petition. How could they think of it? A Government in every country should be just like a corporation, and in this country it is made up of the landed interest which alone has a right to be represented." ¹⁾

However, in the end, the rapidly changing economic environment made it imperative and right that representative institutions should be created. This genuine want was eventually supplied by Trade Unions.

The cotton industry developed with great strides in the /

1) The History of the Working Classes p. 221. by the Rt. Hon. T. Johnston.

the period 1788-1830. Though some of the master weavers of Glasgow used cotton for the weft in the 70's, pure cotton goods were not produced on any great scale till Arkwright's water-frame was adopted in the 80's. A further development of fine cotton fabrics, like muslin, was ensured by Crompton's invention of the mule in 1779. But the great opportunity for the cotton industry was provided strangely enough by the loss of the tobacco trade and the Plantation markets as a direct result of the American War of Independence. With amazing resiliency Scottish economic life recovered. Commerce with the West Indies was established and the famous Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, the first of its kind, created in 1783. Versatile capitalists at once saw the possibilities of the new cotton industry. The first successful cotton mill was established in Rothesay in 1779. The main industry, however, centred in Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire. Large-scale cotton spinning commenced with the founding of the New Lanark Mills in 1786 by David Dale the self-made magnate. Other famous names connected with the industry include the Buchanan brothers, James Finlay and his son Kirkman Finlay "one of the greatest merchants of Scotland, and, I well believe one of the most intelligent."¹⁾

In 1790, Wm. Kelly, manager of the New Lanark Mills applied power to the mule. Once his invention was perfected, with the disappearance of the jenny, the cotton industry was conducted on the factory system.

By /

1) Peter's Letters.) Vol. III. p. 199.
to His Kinsfolk)

By 1800, cotton had become the most important industry in Scotland. Lockhart describes a visit to one of Glasgow's cotton mills in a way which shows he was not blind, despite the material prosperity of the owners, to the wretched life of the workers, even under humane employers like the Finlays. "After being confined for hours to the steam-heated atmosphere of these places my ears dingling with the eternal rock and buzz of wheels and spindles and my eyes fretted and inflamed with the flakes of cotton everywhere flying about and in spite of all that I have said, my spirits being not a little depressed by the contemplation of so many thousands of poor creatures shut out¹⁾ in their captivity from - 'The gentle visitations of the sun'"

Although metallurgic industries like coal-mining, smelting and forging did not develop to any great extent until after the 30's of the 19th century, nevertheless there was, a small but promising iron industry.

Though there had been charcoal furnaces like those at Invergarry and Abernethy in the first half of the 18th century, the industry dates from the foundation of the Carron Iron Works in 1759 - the first to use charcoal from the carboniferous formation of central Scotland - the industry progressed slowly because of the scarcity of metal workers, but by 1780 the Carron works were one of the foremost munition works in Europe, and the famous ""carronades" short, light guns of large calibre were perfected here and adopted by the Admiralty in 1779. Pipes, cylinders, sugar-boilers, anchors and Carron stoves and grates were /

2) Peter's Letters, Vol III, p. 201
to His Kinsfolk)

were other commodities manufactured here. The founder of this work, Dr. Roebuck was also responsible for promoting chemical industries in Scotland through his initial success in improving the method of manufacturing vitriol in Prestonpans as early as 1749.

Meanwhile other furnaces were set up in Lanarkshire and Ayrshire and were engaged in puddling and rolling malleable iron. But the industry made slow progress till 1828, when the hot blast was invented.

Yet Sinclair in his General Report of 1814 wrote that the value of pig-iron produced was only £229,320 while the value of cotton cloth was £6,964,482 and of linen £1,775,000.

III

As social and industrial conditions were vastly improved by the end of the century, so was the intellectual stature of the race. From a literary point of view, it was perhaps unfortunate that the Union of the Parliaments should coincide with the Age of Reason in England. The lettered Scot was stilted enough, and the bias was at once given to an unfortunate polemic and rhetoric tendency, with sad loss to belles lettres for a time. Even that gentle scholar, and may it be said, that sober one, in a 'galravitching' age, Thomas Ruddiman, a lover of the humanities, was tainted with faction and angrily raked up charges against George Buchanan of fraudulent misrepresentation of Queen Mary, - charges answered by the stings of a nest of hornets - the Whig scholars and Grammar schoolmasters.

However /

However, by their lectures, men like Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) who held the chair of Moral Philosophy in Glasgow University, with his optimistic philosophy of Beauty and Virtue, the great Adam Smith, and above all perhaps at this time, Dr. Hugh Blair stimulated a fresh interest in literature, an interest "which spread from exclusively literary circles to the professional and middle classes"¹⁾. This lay apart from the Scots absorption in philosophy, economics, and history, and resulted in the founding of a Chair of Rhetoric and Belles-lettres in 1761 with Dr. Hugh Blair as Professor.

IV

Not only was Dr. Hugh Blair, Professor of literature in Edinburgh University, he was also the eminent divine whom Dr. Samuel Johnson "loved", whose sermons - "sermones aurei ac auro magis aurei" were widely read and translated even as late as 1802. Yet, gifted, though he was, he represented but one example of the distinguished race of scholars and gentlemen which the Church of Scotland was producing in the second half of the eighteenth century. "The clergy of Scotland, the most decent and consistent in their conduct of any set of men I ever met with of that order, are at present much changed from the furious²⁾ illiterate and enthusiastic teachers of the old times".

These remarks are significant; the use of the words "decent", "furious", "enthusiastic", indicate an Augustan trend of thought; the Age of Reason, as the early eighteenth century was /

1) Dr. Meikle. "Scotland and the French Rev." Chap.II, p.15.

2) Pennant - "Tour in Scotland " i.p.155.

was styled in England, was now beginning to have effect on the Church of Scotland. Dr. Alexander Carlyle, parish minister of Inveresk, and the "Jupiter" Carlyle of society drawing-rooms in the mid eighteenth century, comments in his diary under the year 1805, that Scotland had enjoyed, from the time of the Revolution Settlement of 1688, 117 years of tranquility. "How far the steady loyalty to the Crown and attachment to the constitution, together with the unwearied diligence of the clergy in teaching a rational religion may have contributed to this prosperity, cannot be exactly ascertained."

The Revolution Settlement of 1688 had marked an epoch in the history of the Church of Scotland - the end of that stormy period, from the Reformation of 1569 onwards, which had bred covenanters and dragoon, and which elsewhere had seen the Civil War in England and the Thirty Years' War on the Continent. These bitter contests had all arisen through the concept of the Church as a department of state with a direct political interest. In 1688, with its complete autonomy established and with its Presbyterian tradition kept intact, the Church of Scotland had nothing further for which to strive, and it was at this stage of its history, that King William III, sensing the polemical vigour of the ecclesiastic courts sent his wise message to the governing body of the Church, the General Assembly of Scotland in 1690, "nor do we intend that our authority shall ever be a tool to the irregular passions of any party. Moderation is what religion enjoins, neighbouring churches expect from you, and we recommend to you".

Moderation /

Moderation, then, was to be the spirit of the age, but the Scots Church at the start of the eighteenth century, was not yet ready for it. The "hungry years" after the Union of 1707 with their accompanying poverty and pestilence had created a spiritual atmosphere of despair, which was reflected in the life of the Church. During the 17th century, Scottish religion had come under the influence of English Puritanism, and now this, combined with the strife of previous years, still fresh in memory, and the wretched economic plight of the country at the time, helped to make a grim religion, still more grim. There was a sense of doom, conveyed by the preachers in "burdens" like those of the Israelite prophets of old". "Remember, I pray you, this is a very ill-chosen time to live at a distance from God. It is a time when Divine Providence frowns upon the land we live in; the clouds of wrath are gathering thick above our heads.¹⁾ Thus luridly did Mr. Boston, minister at Ettrick, and author of "The Fourfold State", warn his congregation.

This conviction of Divine Wrath arose from the belief, that through the fall of Adam, all human beings were condemned from birth and only a few "elect" could attain Heaven, which was but vaguely limned and never with that fervid satisfaction attending a description of Hell. There was no pity and no grace in this religion.

A religious teaching that discredited morality in favour of an "elect" theory, common to all Calvinistic Churches, fatally impaired national effort. Farmers allowed the land, which was blasted /

1) Boston - "The Fourfold State" p. 273, Ed. 1824.

blasted by God's wrath, to become choked with weeds. Later, Robert Burns was to lampoon this "elect" idea with jocose scurrility in 'Holy Willie's Prayer':-

"O Thou, who in the heavens does dwell
 Who, as it pleases best Thysel
 Sends ane to heaven, an' ten to Hell
 A' for Thy glory.
 And no' for ony gude or ill
 They've done afore Thee."

In the sixth stanza, the poet lists the pleasures denounced by the church and 'lights on the real secret of its hold over popular imagination:-

"O L - d, Thou kens what zeal I bear
 When drinkers drink, an' swearers swear
 An' singin' there, an' dancin' here
 Wi' great and sma'.
 For I am keepit by Thy fear
 Free frae them a'."

Yet these ministers, who preached this creed, were grimly sincere, wrestling in their emotional way, with their own realisation of the devil; their diaries reveal them, in many instances, as spiritual hypochondriacs. How zealous they were in seeing to it that the Sabbath was inexorably kept! Elders vigilantly¹⁾ patrolled the streets to force home all found "vaguing"; Kirk Sessions dealt terrifyingly with offenders.

Outstanding was their piety on "the Occasion" or "Great Wark" as it was called - that was at the celebration of the Lord's Supper when sacramental pilgrimages took place. The ceremony, with its attendant preparations, usually lasted from the Thursday to the Monday. Those "Occasions" resembled the pilgrimages /

1) H. Grey Graham. The Social Life of Scotland in the 18th Century. p. 315.

pilgrimages of the middle-ages - at first undertaken in a spirit of great devotion, but later liable to gross abuse. As Chaucer portrayed the secular spirit as well as the devout in his Prologue, so it was left to the Scottish poet Burns to deal the well-aimed blow at the holiday-lewdness of these supposed religious celebrations in his "Holy Fair" - but by his time, in the 80's of the century, many of the clergy, too, had denounced the merry-making from the pulpit.

However, John Gibson Lockhart in his "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk" describes a gathering for the "serving" of the Lord's Sacrament at the beginning of the 19th century, in its twofold character - pious and secular. He describes the "conflux" on the roads, people in carts, on horseback, or walking - the females in cloaks of duffle grey or bright scarlet, the patriarchs blue-bonneted. Then the effect of the service - "the solemn devotion imprinted on every downcast eyelid and trembling lip around me" impresses Peter; he feels that now he can understand "every train in Burns' writings ten times better" from the consciousness of being among "his Scottish peasantry".¹⁾ He even scans every individual attentively "to see if I could trace any countenance resembling that of Burns". Yet in all the alehouses of the village, and in many of the neighbouring fields was a scene of a very different nature. Here were the "racketing and mirth" of "Holy Fair".

Such was the religious life at the beginning of the century, but as time advanced, a new and more tolerant temper began to make itself felt. Even as early as 1720, a controversy had arisen in the General Assembly over the reissue by the ministers /

1) Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk, Vol III. p. 322. 324. 329.

ministers Boston and Hogg, of a tract, entitled "The Marrow of Divinity". Use of this was forbidden and there was definite indication that a reaction had set in, even among evangelical clergy, and certainly among the cultured members of the ministry, against a religious teaching that laid no insistence on morality.

In 1736 there occurred the well-known split in the church called the Secession from the fact that four ministers, led by Ebenezer Erskine set up an Associate Church of their own. The quarrel concerned the mode of appointing ministers; the General Assembly favoured presentation by a patron and the heritors, while Erskine and his three colleagues felt that elections should be more democratic and that heads of families should also have a say in the choice of their parish minister. The Secession Church and the Established Church stood ultimately for the same Presbyterian tenets; this was the case with all the schismatic churches that came into being throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and there was much expense of spirit in a waste of sectarianism. Perhaps this was due to the fact that the Church throughout the eighteenth century, shed no fresh light on theology, and the energy and devotion that should have gone to religion proper, were diverted into other channels, either into dogma, or, as was the case among the scholarly into cultural studies.

The first enthusiasts of the Secession Church, as was usual with most religious reformers, had much fanaticism in their nature, but as the age wore on, a more temperate spirit became noticeable. The Rev. Dr. John Mitchell, in his "Memories of Ayrshire" /

Ayrshire", represents complete equanimity between the two Ministers in the Parish of Beith, his father, the Rev. Andrew Mitchell of the Secession, and the Rev. David McLellan of the Establishment, so much so that the latter even vacated his church, churchyard and the tent, to be occupied by the Secession Minister and his colleagues on sacrament day in the summer. "They set the example of such seeming accord, for without any compromise of principle on either side, they co-operated in public matters of common concern, such as the support of the poor, and they and their families interchanged not only the courtesies of life, but the tokens of kindness and friendship".¹⁾

Indeed, though no doubt prejudiced, Dr. John Mitchell gives a very pleasant impression of these godly men. Denying that they were "sanctimonious and pharasaical, demure and sour, loving to drink the waters of strife," though admitting they "were doubtless not without human infirmities", he shows them as "men of God; lovers of what was true and good; and endeavouring to follow out in their own lives the faith and practice which they recommended to others from the pulpit". Within the Church of Scotland a new generation of ministers with cultural tastes and close contact with society, brought a mellowing influence into the religious sphere and had a beneficial effect on Scottish life and letters. Newton's Principia of 1687 with its statement of the law of gravitation, had shown that the universe /

1) "Memories of Ayrshire", p. 299, by the Rev. Dr. John Mitchell.

universe was subject to law, and was not directed by divine caprice. Rationalism, mentioned by Carlyle in his diary, was therefore to be the dominating principle of the 18th century, affecting life, literature, politics, philosophy and religion. As the Roman Church had its Jansenites, France its Encyclopaedists, Germany its Aufklärung, England its Deists and Latitudinarians, so Scotland had its Moderates. King William's message to the General Assembly bore fruit.

Though "Moderation" was derived from the rationalism that governed contemporary life, there was something in the Scottish temperament that responded gladly to this spirit. Perhaps it was not insignificant that the Rev. George Ridpath, minister of Stichel, a distinguished product of the Church at its best, should reveal in his catholic reading, a decided preference for humanist studies. In his diary entry for 'Munday' - Jan. 17th 1758, he writes:-

"Read (the) Scots Compendium Drummond v. Buchanan, who is certainly scarce inferior to the very best classiks. I read him with vast pleasure."

Here was a definite link through Buchanan to the Renaissance.

Yet Moderation must be represented as an intellectual force rather than as an ecclesiastical policy, for the paradox was, that though liberal theoretically, it was practically rather repressive, for it was fighting against traditions of a fanatical past; thus, by using patronage to crush popular prejudice, it was attempting to attract men of breeding into the church.

"Even /

"Even the Kirk of Scotland so long reproached with fanaticism and canting abounds at present with ministers celebrated for their learning and respectable for their moderation."¹⁾

"Moderation then was a temper and not a system,"²⁾ and through its dignity and toleration and in the brilliance of its disciples, during a period of fifty years from 1750 onwards, the church had a profound influence on national life.

Side by side with the religion of reason, which the term "Moderation" implied, was the religion of feeling. Scottish Evangelicalism proclaimed that religion sprang from the "inward parts"; its teachers were eloquent expounders of their own creed, and flaming denunciators of all that deviated from it. The Pietism of Germany, the missionary labours of Wesley and Whitefield, all had affinities with Scottish Evangelicalism.

Both Moderation and Evangelicalism were protests against the political religion of the 17th century, but in time, both degenerated into systems of ecclesiastical policy.

The learning which both forms of religion inspired, differed greatly, for whereas the scholars among the Evangelicals, like the Jesuits of the Roman Church, confined their energies to the exposition of dogma the Moderates showed a wide range of studies, the classics, history and philosophy, in accordance with the taste of the age. Indeed the study of philosophy was of vital importance to Moderate churchmen for David Hume, following a long line of distinguished philosophers, Spinoza, Leibniz

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1) The Autobiog. of Dr. A. Carlyle, ed. J. H. Burton, 1910.
p. 260.

2) p. 35. Two Centuries of the Church of Scotland, 1707-1929.
Rev. A.J. Campbell.

Locke and Berkeley, by his tenets, was to force Christian apologists to defend their religion on a sounder basis.

Edinburgh, the meeting-place of the General Assembly,
¹⁾
 was "a hotbed of genius" as Smollett remarked in his novel *Humphrey Clinker*, and it is significant that in the list of "authors of the first distinction", the majority are ministers of the Church of Scotland - "the two Humes, Robertson, Smith, Wallace, Blair, Ferguson, Wilkie, etc. and I have found them all as agreeable in conversation, as they are instructive and entertaining in their writings. These acquaintances I owe to the friendship of Dr. Carlyle, who wants nothing but inclination to figure with the rest upon paper."

Of these men, Principal Robertson perhaps was the one who wielded the greatest authority within the church, for as Moderator of the General Assembly as well as Principal of the University, he held sway, not undisputed, for twenty years from 1750-70. Dr. Johnson "loved the man" and Dr. Alexander Carlyle gives generous testimony to Robertson's ability as leader in debates - his "soothing manner" which prevented adversaries being "hard-mouthed with him" and "the great order" and decorum with which disputes were heard.

The attendance of Henry Dundas, Lord Melville, "who was in himself a host, added greatly to our strength and made
²⁾
 the business fashionable" so that the General Assembly attracted at this time the most brilliant and erudite men in Scotland.

Apart /

1) *Humphrey Clinker*, p. 260 by Tobias Smollett. (Edinburgh 1806)

2) Alex. Carlyle, *Autobiography*. p. 432.

Apart from his gifts of leadership, Principal Robertson was the ablest man of letters in the Church of Scotland. His taste naturally inclined towards history and while minister of Gladsmuir, he wrote his History of Scotland, published in February 1759 and comprising the reigns of Queen Mary and James VI. An admiring if critical reader was Mr. George Ridpath of Stichel
' - Friday March 30th.

"Read Robertson all day. Finished the second volume of History with the corresponding papers in the appendix, also his dissertation on King Henry's murder. Was very much entertained and not a little instructed."

Robertson's fame spread beyond the bounds of Scotland, and in London, where he was popular as the historian of Queen Mary, Dr. Carlyle says of his reception:-

"He did not disappoint their expectation, for though he spoke broad Scotch in point of pronunciation and accent or tone, his was the language of literature and taste and of an enlightened and liberal mind."¹⁾

Dr. Carlyle himself, parish minister of Inveresk, a vivid personality of the Moderate Church, rejoiced greatly in Robertson's supremacy, because under him the Scottish Church was kept segregated from politics. Every year, it was the custom of the General Assembly to petition the Government for redress from the grievance of patronage, but Robertson discouraged even this slight overture and Carlyle notes with satisfaction:-

"Next /

1) The Autobiography of Dr. A. Carlyle, p. 519.

"Next year, (1767) there was a feeble attempt to restore the article in the Instructions, but this did not even raise a debate, and we heard no more of it."¹⁾

It was among his own colleagues, too that Carlyle found the most stimulating society:- "But though I lived very lived very well with the upper families, and could occasionally consort with the burgesses, some of whom, though unpolished were sensible people, yet my chief society was with John Home and Robertson and Bannatyne and George Logan, who were clergymen about my own age and very accomplished."²⁾

John Home was the celebrated and popular author of "the Douglas Tragedy" - the only respectable contribution to drama that Scotland proffered in this century. Astounding was the uproar in the General Assembly when it was learnt that not only had a clergyman written the play, but that some members of the cloth had actually attended a performance of it in Edinburgh and had consorted with the actors Digges and Mrs Ward: among them was the impenitent Alexander Carlyle, who with the other culprits, was summoned to attend the Presbytery for rebuke.

"This confirmed my resolution not to yield but to run every risk rather than furnish an example of tame submission, not merely to a fanatical but illegal exertion of power which would have stamped disgrace on the Church of Scotland, kept the younger clergy for half a century longer in the trammels of bigotry and hypocrisy and debarred every generous spirit from entering into orders". As Carlyle maintained the Church must "discriminate the artificial virtues and vices".

In /

1) The Autobiography of Dr. Alex. Carlyle, p. 469.
 2) " " " " " " p. 316.

In his remoter parish of Stichel, Ridpath, one of whose friends, Matthew Dysart, had attended the play dismisses the action of the Presbytery contemptuously:- Tuesday Feb. 15th 1757 -

"In the Edinburgh paper, there is a long remonstrance from the Bishops of Glasgow against John Home's tragedy and the clergy, who were seeing it acted, from which it appears that these people continue the same fools they have been for a long, long period."

But sense of values differed greatly in those times from now. Mr. Ridpath himself is not averse to buying tickets in guinea lotteries though he feels he must defend his actions in his diary. This mild gambling was quite openly practised among the clergy of the time.

The minister of Stichel's diary reveals an amazing mental vitality and wide interests. Nov. 5th 1755. "At Kelso attending the Presbytery and library meeting. At the library settled out year's accounts and gave our great commission for books. Also drew up a contract for perpetuating the Library and paying an annual sum towards its increase and support."

This entry is interesting as refuting Thomas Somerville's assertion in "My Own Life and Times" that there were no circulating libraries in the South of Scotland.

Ridpath's reading, as has been mentioned, was typical of the taste of his Moderate contemporaries, though he personally must have been an unusually gifted man. Medical books from the 12th century *Regimen Sanitatis Salernitano* of Arnaldus de Villa Nova to his friend Francis Home's "Medical Prelections" were of absorbing interest, and used not merely theoretically, when the good /

good man by his nursing saved the lives of some of his friends and relatives suffering from the dread scourges of diphtheria and smallpox. He could make astronomical calculations, read widely in history and even composed a sound History of the Borders, completed and published by his brother Philip in 1776. Above all, he absorbed the classics - "slept on Horace" "at night read Epictetus with vast relish".

Compared with this exuberance - "came home on Saturday to dinner and did something for tomorrow" reads more perfunctorily. Indeed not even the Moderate Church produced any distinguished theology. The Moderates had broken with the emotion of terror preaching, and gave attention to the language and construction of their sermons, often preaching from Mss. - despite the horror of some of the Evangelists who would preach on a single text or "ordinar" for a whole year. Moderate preaching laid stress on "cauld morality" as opposed to the Evangelists' "tidings o' damnation". The Rev. Dr. John Mitchell is very critical about the Moderates. "Declining the active and energetic discharge of the duties of their spiritual and evangelical functions, many of the pledged servants of the Lord betook themselves to literary study, or the culture of their glebes, perhaps farms, or other secular concerns."¹⁾

One great gift of the Moderates to the Church was the Paraphrases - forty-five pieces in the first book of 1745, with a revised version in 1751, and a third in 1781. These were compiled by a committee of the General Assembly, of which leading members were Moderates and these paraphrases have ranked high among sacred lyrics.

The /

1) Rev. Dr. J. Mitchell - Memories of Ayrshire. p 303.

The dignified assertion then of "Jupiter" Carlyle concerning the debate in the General Assembly on the augmentation of stipends was no vain boast:-

"There were few branches of literature in which the ministers of this Church have not excelled. There are few subjects of fine writing in which they do not stand foremost in the rank of authors which is a prouder boast than all the pomp of hierarchy. Let us not complain of poverty for it is a splendid poverty indeed. It is 'paupertas fecunda virorum'¹⁾".

But Moderatism outlived its own greatness; the spiritual atmosphere created by the French Revolution of 1789, inaugurated a more invigorating creed. Men, generously stirred by the slogans of the French Revolution responded gladly to the more emotional preaching of the Evangelicals. This emotion in the pulpit had its counterpart in the imaginative literature, which was beginning to usurp the place given to philosophy and history in the previous epoch (1750-80), and which was a direct product of the Romantic Revival. The new stirring of intellect was also evident in the vigorous output of periodical literature of a semi-literary, semi-political character, such as the publications of the Edinburgh Review and the Quarterly Review (Feb. 1809).

But the first manifestations of the new order upon earth as created in France, was the Reign of Terror: from that cataclysm arose the tyranny of Napoleon, which cooled the ardour never very fervent of Revolutionary supporters in Britain. Panic in /

1) The Autobiography of Dr. A. Carlyle. p. 99.

in the ruling classes caused intolerance to creep into national life; anything liberal savoured of Jacobinism and was condemned as such.

At such a time of stress, the stern authoritative doctrines of Calvinism have always exercised their greatest attraction; the humanism of the age of Erasmus was overwhelmed in the great spiritual turmoil of the Reformation; and now, the age of Voltaire, had the same fate in the Revolution. Evangelism hardened into a narrow orthodoxy. The Church was no longer "the bright particular star" that shed its lustre on literature: it drew a sharp distinction between secular and sacred, and discouraged all its clergymen from taking part in any literary pursuits that had no direct bearing on their practical work as parish ministers.

Thus the stirring of new ideas, partly the result of the French Revolution and partly the accelerating material progress of the people, which produced the literary renaissance of the age of Sir Walter Scott at the beginning of the 19th century, fostered no galaxy of ministerial talent as had been the case in the second half of the 18th century. Exceptions are Dr. J. Jamieson with his Dictionary of the Scottish Language, and Dr. T. McCrie with his Life of Knox and Life of Melville.

Rather was it from among the literary ranks that ideals of beauty, dignity and toleration were forthcoming though their effect was not immediately apparent, for the stricter section among the Churchmen decried the Waverley Novels of Sir Walter Scott as sinful because they were fiction, and if any took delight /

delight in such "light" reading their delight was not openly avowed. The portraiture of the Covenanters in "Old Mortality" aroused most acrimony, being regarded in the light of a violent attack on the ark of the covenant. The pendulum had swung violently in the other direction, from the time when a minister could write in his diary. "For certainly there never was a set of more barbarous, nonsensical bigots than the bulk of the Covenanters."¹⁾

But the most violently outspoken are never the most widely representative, and the Waverley Novels easily survived in fame the Evangelicalism that condemned them.

V

The Age of Reason was necessarily a great talking age and the Athenian coffee houses of London plus the influence of the Spectator papers, finally encouraged the establishment of boisterous rivals in the North. No doubt, as with Dr. Johnson's conversations, literature was the loser, and much sappy utterance and brilliant wit were spilt with the claret at these literary Saturnalia of Old Edinburgh. It is a commonplace that in taverns modern Scottish literature was born, and that the first public it addressed was in a public house. Men are at their most communicative over good food and drink, and the claret and oysters, the 'rizzard haddies' and ale of Rankin's, unloosed many a tongue -

'Over a wondrous bowl of flowing punch
We'll plight anew at Dons' or Steel 's
Who bears the double keys, of plenty sign;
Or at facetious Thom's or Adamson
Who rears alone - what need she more? - the vine',

sang /

1) Rev. G. Ridpath's Diary, p. 179.

sang the Horatian Hamilton of Bangour. This exuberance, perhaps often Bacchanalian, was never to leave Scots literature; sometimes, it descends with lapses of taste into practical joking and literary horseplay, but it always abounds in high glee and in intense appreciation of the oddities of human men and women. Kay the barber's caricatures have their counterparts in literature, in the memoirs, in the letters, and finally in the novels of the period. Lockhart and Christopher North had this spirit, too abundantly at times, but it was also to be found among young blue-stockings like Susan Ferrier, as well as among the older Spartan ladies. It betokened abundant zest for life, and was to be a priceless gift for the novel. No doubt, as a direct outcome of the clubs, which had made Scottish literati familiar with the Spectator papers of Addison and Steele, there appeared in the early 19th century two Reviews and a famous Magazine.

The Edinburgh Review was a Whig, the Quarterly a Tory output. From 1803 to 1829, Francis Jeffrey piloted the Edinburgh Review. The Quarterly, published by John Murray under the editorship of William Gifford, appeared first in February 1809 as a counterblast to the Edinburgh Review.

Blackwood's Magazine, in its early years satiric if not libellous, and of a strong Tory tendency, began in 1817 under the editorship of Lockhart and Wilson (Christopher North) who "both wrote with great spirit either in prose or in verse; and neither were troubled with delicacy - a perfect combination for
¹⁾
 a libellous periodical work".

However /

1) Some Letters of Lord Cockburn edited by H.A. Cockburn, p 92
 Edinburgh, 1932

However Cockburn went on to remark:- "These days are now long past and each of them has justly reached a high literary position."

Lockhart indeed, at Sir Walter Scott's suggestion, broke off his connection with Blackwood's Magazine in 1820. In a letter to Southey, referring to this, Sir Walter Scott wrote:-

"When he married my daughter six years ago, I pointedly objected to this application of his talents, as what was not respectable in itself and tended to compromise my daughter's happiness."

Nevertheless, Blackwood's Magazine attracted and fostered the growing literary talent of Scotland and as can be deduced from Mr. Blackwood's correspondence, a publisher's life in those days of the early 19th century was an exhilarating one - for who knew what fresh genius each day might bring forth; and though he had lost Scott to Constable, Blackwood had the honour to usher in the novels of Susan Ferrier "who has proved a permanent distinction to her age and country";¹⁾ and was the kindly and genial sponsor of James Hogg, John Galt and John Gibson Lockhart who confessed to being disheartened, without the encouragement of the great publisher.

In 1754 a curious group, an offspring of the club habit thus formed, the Select Society, had met in the Advocates' Library, for the purpose of 'philosophical enquiry and improvement in the art of speaking'. This club throws an interesting light on that painful diffidence and self-consciousness of the Scot with /

1) Wm. Blackwood and his Sons", Mrs. Oliphant, Vol. I., p. 36.

with regard to speaking and writing in the English language. There was Dr. Thomas Reid who submitted his Ms to his rival Hume, with a request that the genial philosopher should correct his style. Hume, in his turn, humbly forwarded his work for correction to the London Scot David Mallet, while Dr. Beattie of the 'Minstrel' fame, drew up a list of forbidden Scotticisms. Words like 'barbarous', 'vulgar', 'improper', were hurled at the meek head of the offending vernacular, so that it retired in alarm before an approved rhetoric. Schoolmasters bound themselves to teach English in the 'modern Method', purging it of provincialisms.

This shamefaced retirement of the vernacular was a great impediment in the development of the novel. Scotland had shown her vigour in her political and social recovery, and her poetry heralded by Allan Ramsay, and his revival of the ballads, with Thomson's Seasons and the attraction of the Heroic in Macpherson's Ossian, had made her a power to be reckoned with in the Romantic Revival.

After these successes, and with the triumphant vindication of the vernacular in the poetry of Fergusson and Burns, Scottish prose took heart.

These literary contributions bound Scotland in closer intellectual contact with England than she had been since the days of the Makars; many literary Scots made their way to London and even those at home, were quick to perceive the trend of literary fashion. An instance of this is cited by H. W. Thompson in his study of the Scottish 'Man of Feeling'. There appeared in the Scots /

Scots Magazine for June 1760, in the same year as its publication in France, a translation of the prose tale by Marmontel 'L'amitié à l'épreuve'. Stimulated by the philosophy with its central principle of benevolence of the Scottish Francis Hutcheson, himself a disciple of Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, the sentimental novel, which had had such vogue in England and France was popularised in Scotland by Henry Mackenzie the Scottish Addison. His 'Man of Feeling' was the culmination of sentimentalism as it had appeared in the works of Richardson Goldsmith, Shenstone, Stern, and of the French Rousseau and Marmontel.

Mackenzie himself notes in a letter of 31st July 1769 written to his cousin, Miss Betty Rose of Kilravock, also quoted by Mr. Thompson, that the novel form is 'more important and indeed more difficult than I believe is generally imagined by the authors ----. It is a sort of composition which I observe the Scottish genius is remarkably deficient in. Except Smollett and one female author, I remember none of our country who have made attempts that way'.

Yet Smollett himself, though he has the honour of being the first to use the Scots vernacular in formal fiction, in the persons of Lismahago and Micklewhimmen, types of the Scots soldier of fortune and lawyer, (occurring in his novel, Humphrey Clinker 1773), also had his eye trained on a great English model - Henry Fielding, and was to prove himself a robust disciple in the Picaresque novel.

After this performance, the vernacular retreated to the chapbooks, /

chapbooks, but reappeared from its retirement in 1793 with John Trusler's 'Life' or 'The Adventures of William Ramble', which began a series of novels, by far the best of which was Mrs. Hamilton's Cottagers of Glenburnie. In these, the authors were dimly beginning to realise how dialect could be turned to account, but as yet it projected awkward and angular from the usual English paragraphs. Such are Mrs Helme's 'Duncan and Peggy', a Scottish Tale, 1794, and Mrs Anna Maria Bennet's 'The Beggar Girl', 1797, to mention only two.

Thus the Scottish vernacular novel made its way into the world of letters, and the Waverley Novels 'but gave impetus to a movement well under way'¹⁾. The time was ripe; that spectacular literary forger Macpherson had turned the eyes of European authors like Herder, and Lamartine to this northern country of Ossian and the grey mists, mists that were to dissolve with the false-heroic poetry and its shadow valleys before the rays directed on the bright authentic land of the new Scottish novels. This land was peopled not only by the jostling pageant of Waverley, but by the shrewd merchants, sturdy farmers, and 'gausy' lairds of the Realist novel.

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1) Introductory Essay to the Gathering of the West by John Galt, edited by Bradford Allen Booth. p. 7.

CHAPTER II

Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton and her Times.
The Cottagers of Glenburnie.

I Balance between material and intellectual sides of Scottish life at turn of the 18th - 19th centuries: conservative tendencies in literature fostered by the different societies e.g. Gaelic, Glasgow, Inverness: Nucleus - Edinburgh. Strata of society - lawyers, gentry, clergy and artisans and shopkeepers: wit and dialectics. Good public oratory stimulated by the meetings of the General Assembly: lawyers' influence there as elsewhere; their literary tastes. Kames, Monboddo, Erskine. Church offered criticism by all classes. Influence of Burns; Mrs. Alison Cockburn - specimen of fine old Scotswoman; literary gifts; The Flowers of the Forest; literary salons; friendship with Scot - his comparison of Edinburgh with Paris. Lady Anne Lindsay, Lady Balcarres - Miss Jean Elliot - the Baroness Nairne - all gifted literati, though hiding their identity as authors: all talented but eccentric.

II Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton: her upbringing in Stirling by her aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Marshall. Widely-read but concealed her taste: learning regarded as unfeminine /

unfeminine. English predecessors of Mrs. Hamilton - Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Jane Austen, and the Irish Maria Edgeworth. All interested in the development of female education. Influence of Elizabeth Hamilton's brother Charles on her literary progress: Elizabeth meets his brilliant friends, all attached to Warren Hastings's party: Deaths of uncle and brother. Mrs. Hamilton's appreciation of Charles in her Letters on Education. Visit to Edinburgh in 1800. "Hindoo Rajah" and "The Modern Philosophers": reforming impulse behind her work. "Letters on Education"; "Memoirs of Agrippina". Activities connected with "House of Industry": Her literary gatherings.

- III The Cottagers of Glenburnie - 1808. - comic indictment of Scottish farming life. Cheap people's edition: abridged version; Miss Ferrier's appreciation. Mrs. Benger's claim that "The Cottagers of Glenburnie" produced improvement in farming circles. Jeffrey's criticism in The Edinburgh Review. Summary of "The Cottagers of Glenburnie". Framework of tale is stiff and out of keeping with vernacular conversations of the Cottagers. Mrs. Hamilton's maxims on early training. Social history introduced - e.g. roads, carts. Squalor of Glenburnie: borne out by travellers in Scotland, e.g. Burt's letters. Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal. Obstinacy and prejudice of /

of cottagers: canna be "fashed" attitude: fatalistic outlook, encouraged by religious convictions about Will of God. Serious results of sloth in MacClarty family. Morrisons - represent good, industrious peasants. Village schools: morals and discipline in same.

IV Moral purpose of "The Cottagers of Glenburnie" less important now than picture of Scottish peasant life. Literary vogue for the moral tale. Comparison with "Contes Moraux" of Marmontel, and "The Parents' Assistant" of Maria Edgeworth. Moral reform of characters inevitable in these tales; not so in "The Cottagers of Glenburnie" - tragic touch. Squalor and tragedy anticipate the modern Scots novel devoted to realistic portrayal of seamy side of life, e.g. G.D. Brown's - "The House with the Green Shutters"; Cronin's "Hatter's Castle," etc. But moral has disappeared: Characters - embodiment of evil in surroundings e.g. Brodie the Hatter. Bounds of realism passed. Picture too black.

MRS. ELIZABETH HAMILTON AND HER TIMES. (1758-1816)

THE COTTAGERS OF GLENBURNIE.

1.

The throb of machinery heard in Scottish factories in the last years of the eighteenth century was proof of great material change; the old leisurely ways of the passing age were accelerated and the speed excited men, dazzled by the prospect of vast new undertakings.

Commercial adventure began, to absorb Scottish energy quite as fiercely and as zealously as had any Covenanting crusade. Yet before the impetus had gained its momentum just at the turn of the century, an amazingly fine balance was struck between the material and intellectual sides of national life. Wealth enriched life, but did not dominate it. The originality, however, which should have inspired literature seemed to be diverted to pioneer work in industry, so that in intellectual and in spiritual spheres, this period was marked by a maturing of old forces rather than by a creating of new ones. Burn, the most striking figure, reveals as has often been said, not originality but a wonderful ability in manipulating old Scots tradition. Dugald Stewart was the disciple of a great philosophy, rather than the instigator of a new one.

It was a time for quiet scholarship, such as prepared the/



the way for the many societies founded in the opening years of the nineteenth century, e.g. the Gaelic Societies of Edinburgh, (1811) Glasgow, (1812) Inverness, (1818) and the Bannatyne (1832) and Maitland (1837) Clubs. All these institutions became engaged in rescuing, resuscitating and documenting the past in preparing the way for the two great creative impulses of the age in Scotland, - the *Waverley* Novels of Sir Walter Scott, and the social novels of John Galt.

Meanwhile, the nucleus of political, intellectual and fashionable Scotland was naturally Edinburgh; here, in the compact society of some 82,000 souls, could be seen much of the eccentricity and genius of the time. Despite the political stagnation, "no less than the Edinburgh of James IV that town of great talk, vivid humanity and broad, full interests turned her windows on Europe and shone light from them fully as much as she received it".¹⁾

Society in Edinburgh was composed of several layers - "an upper stratum of lawyers, resident gentry, college officials and clergy, reposing on, but by no means separated from a community of shopkeepers and artisans sufficient for the wants of the place".²⁾ Convivial talk, brilliant, serious, gossipy, was the absorbing pastime of young and old. Sydney Smith might jest "that it requires a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scottish understanding",³⁾ but he himself has paid /

1) Scotland in Modern Times, Agnes M. MacKenzie. (1720-1939) p. 82.

2) D.Masson. p. 166. Edinburgh Sketches and Memories.

3) Memoir of Sydney Smith by Lady Holland. p. 18.

paid full tribute, even while mocking, to the "wit and dialectics" which together made "no town in Britain for the last century and a half of greater de¹⁾prosophistic capability".

That public oratory as well as private conversation should be of a high order, was perhaps due in some measure to the regular meetings of the General Assembly, which took the place of the defunct Scots Parliament in form if not in fact. There Scottish identity and opinion were preserved. The influence of the lawyer class was marked, for advocates were called in professional capacity to plead in the trials of recalcitrant clergy men. Perhaps that strain of speculation and criticism, so apparent in the Scottish character was prominent in Edinburgh society, because of the preponderant influence of the lawyer class; nearly all of the most outstanding belonged to the baronetage, yet some had risen by sheer ability from the people; nearly all were literary men, not by profession but by taste, and the constant interchange of witticisms in friendship or in rivalry, the friction of contending temperaments made the mental atmosphere exhilarating. The days of Braxfield the ogre of the Scottish bar, were just over, but memory of that "grin of ineffable sagacity, derision and coarse uncontrollable humour," of those "muscles nourished on a stintless regimen of beef, brandy and claret", of his muttered creed - "They would be muckle the better o' being hangit"²⁾ lingered on in anecdote and memoir. He was not of the literati, as were Kames and Monboddo /

1) D.Masson. p. 176. Edinburgh Sketches and Memories.

2) Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk. Vol. ii pp. 110-117.

Monboddo, tilting and leering at each other, the debonair Harry Erskine, Lord Advocate, ever with the pun or epigram on his lips, the lame John Clerk of Eldin, oracle of Scots Law, "of grim strong counterance with its black far-projecting brows", and many an other of lesser degree.

The clergy had not all their own way in Edinburgh, surrounded as they were by those witty, sceptical lawyers, many of them scions of noble Jacobite Houses, that had never bowed the knee to Presbytery. According to Sydney Smith too - the common people are extremely conversant with the Scriptures; are really not so much pupils as formidable critics to their preachers; many of them are well-read in controversial divinity.¹⁾

A toughness of intellectual fibre was possessed by all classes, who thus lived cheek by jowl with each other in the capital.

Passing in and out of all societies, now gracing a duchess's drawing-room, now raising the rafters of Johnnie Dowie's, or 'flyting' with printer Smellie in the house of Dawney Douglas in the Anchor Close, haunt of the Crochallan Fencibles, was the poet Robert Burns. By 1844, Lord Cockburn, then an old judge, was to write of Burns vernacular poetry:-

"In losing it, we lose ourselves."

Whatever the failings of this attractive personality, they were human failings and as such had many sympathisers.

"The town is at present agog with the ploughman poet, who receives adulation with native dignity, and is the very figure of his profession - strong and coarse - but has a most enthusiastick /

1) Memoirs (p.7) of Sydney Smith by Lady Holland.

enthusiastick heart of love.¹⁾"

How that last possession would endear him to the writer, the indomitable and delightful old Mrs. Alison Cockburn, one of that company of remarkable free-speaking gentlewomen of an older day, whose conversation spiced the coarser rhetoric of the men. A reigning toast herself, since the days of Lamotte's dancing class, and always delightfully susceptible to compliment, Mrs. Cockburn noted with approval, that though -

"he has seen Duchess Gordon and all the gay world, his favorite for looks and manners is Bess Burnet". (the lovely daughter of Monboddo)²⁾

"The man will be spoiled, if he can spoil, but he keeps his simple manners and quite sober".

"No doubt he will be at the Hunter's Hall to-morrow, which has made all women and miliners mad. Not a gauze fantasy of cap under two geanies, many ten, twelve, oh! I have had more pleasure, I'm sure in cloathing a dirty, naked foundling of ten years old"³⁾. This old Scotswoman possessed the shrewd common-sense of her race.

Seven years later Burns writes of another side of Mrs. Cockburn's life -

"The three stanzs beginning 'I hae seen the smiling o'/"

1) Letters of Mrs. Alison Cockburn - p. 187. 30th Dec. 1786.

2) Letters of Mrs. Alison Cockburn p. 188.

3) (Letters of Mrs. A. Cockburn) p. 189

o' fortune beguiling' are worthy of a place, were it but to immortalise the author of them, who is an old lady of my acquaintance and at this moment living in Edinburgh."¹⁾

The poem referred to - "The Flowers of the Forest", inspired Burns early song - "I dream'd I lay".

"I hate print and though I have been sung at wells to the flowers of the forest, I never was in print that anybody but a street singer could decipher"²⁾ was Mrs. Cockburn's characteristic comment.

Perhaps the dilettanti of St. Roman's Well might have sung some of Mrs. Cockburn's songs. Scott makes these fashionable triflers tattle about the Duchess of Gordon, and admire Burns' fine glowing eyes.

One of Mrs. Cockburn's songs links her Edinburgh with that of the '45. Contrary to the usual fashion of her class she had been an anti-Jacobite, hence the saucy lampoon on the Young Pretender -

"Hae ye ony laws to mend?"

A glance at the name and fame of her correspondents shows how this lady's menage was a focal point of real, old Edinburgh society.

In the days of her literary parties, she is rallying David Hume on his scepticism, and later assuring him that he is really a Christian, but does not know it; at another time, she/

1) Letters of Mrs. Alison Cockburn, p. 188. 1793.

2) 28th Nov. 1775 - Letters of Mrs. Alison Cockburn, p. 112.

she is chaffing the famous Suff Johnstone of "the jocky coat,¹⁾ masculine stride, strong voice, and occasionally round oath"; now she is visiting her dear friends the Keiths of Ravelstone, especially Anne, prototype of Sir Walter Scott's Mrs. Baliol Bethune, as well as the Pringles, and the Dalrymples.

An intimate friend of Walter Scott's Mother, she was one of the first to discover the "most extraordinary genius of the boy".²⁾ Scott himself has an interesting comment to make upon her and the ladies of her circle, which emphasises, as has already been remarked, the generous, liberal outlook of old Edinburgh.

"My recollection is that her conversation brought her much nearer to a Frenchwoman than to a native of England; as I have the same impression with respect to ladies of the same period and the same rank in society, I am apt to think that the vieille cour of Edinburgh rather resembled that of Paris than that of St. James's; and particularly that the Scotch imitated the Parisians in laying aside much of the expensive form of these little parties, in which wit and good humour were allowed to supersede all occasion of display."³⁾

And Lady Anne Lindsay, herself author of "Auld Robin Gray" described the intimate of her mother, Lady Balcarres as one who "had goodness, genius, Utopianism, and a decided passion for making of matches, for which reason she was the confidante of all lovesick hearts".³⁾

At/

1) Letters of Mrs. Alison Cockburn, p. 180

2) Letters of Mrs. Alison Cockburn, p. 124

3) Introduction of the Letters of Mrs. A. Cockburn. XXVII. XXVIII

At the age of sixty-five, this ageless coquette (of the auburn hair) was writing:- "Our sex now droops for want of that pleasing admiration that distinguishing praise from the other sex which I knew and rejoiced in many years ago".

There was that other Spartan side of these ladies. Mrs. Cockburn had experienced many vicissitudes in her long life, and was unquenched by the many bereavements her affectionate nature had suffered. In 1785, she writes of Mrs. Scott of Gala -

"In calamity who can help but the God who formed the heart to feel it? Reason is of no use, religion of less - In the meantime, if she could adopt personal severities, it would do well - ride in rain, wind and storm till fatigued to death; or spin on a great wheel and never sit down till weariness of nature makes her. I do assure you I have gone through all these exercises, and have reason to bless God my reason was preserved¹⁾ and health now more than belongs to my age".

The personality of that authoress of the other and better "Flowers of the Forest" does not come so vividly before us, but tradition tells that Miss Jean Elliot was one of the last Edinburgh ladies to keep her private sedan chair. Of her poem, Burns with unerring feeling for the genuine, says:-

"This fine ballad is even a more palpable imitation²⁾ than Hardi Knute"

Another poetess, Caroline, Baroness Nairn, concealed her/

1) Letters of Mrs. Alison Cockburn p. 180

2) Letters of Mrs. Alison Cockburn p. 118

her identity under the name of Mrs. Bogan of Bogan authoress of the Land of the Leal, Caller Herrin', John Todd. This was the era when women, emerging from an intellectual serfdom, were becoming articulate; though centuries of habit made them timid about proclaiming their authorship. These female writers were still of aristocratic class, following at the end of the eighteenth century the example of their high-born English sisters at the opening of this age, the Countess of Winchelsea and Lady Mary Wortley Montague. The great Dr. Johnson himself had experience of these tart and racy ladies with their strong Scots tongue and their kindness, hidden under a crust of seeming ill-humour.

11

In that gallery of robust, fresh-looking men and women in which Sir Henry Baeburn (1756-1823) presented the spirit of his age, is the portrait of a comely lady of shrewd and candid countenance - Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton.

Like Mrs. Alison Cockburn, her famous contemporary, Mrs. Hamilton had suffered many bereavements since early youth. Born on the 25th July 1758 in Belfast, on the death of her father she was sent to Stirling where she was brought up by her aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Marshall. In 1767 her mother died, in 1780 her aunt, who had wisely fostered her taste for reading, which early inclined towards experimental philosophy.

Significant/

Significant of the times had been her aunt's advice against making a parade of her learning; she once even hid a volume of Lord Kames's "Elements of Criticism" under the cushion of a chair" lest she should be detected in a study which pre-¹⁾judice and ignornace might pronounce unfeminine" It was the old story of Mrs. Bogan of Bogan.

That peculiar masculine prejudice against literary women had quite often in the past, driven the few who avowed their tastes - and those mostly nobly-born - to become the eccentrics of their age. Margaret Cavendish, the crazy Duchess of Newcastle, in person, a spectacle of the age of Pepys had made her comments on women's education in the 17th century - "Women live like Bats or Owls, labour like Beasts and die like²⁾ Worms". "The best-bred women are those whose minds are civilest" Her male critics, confronted with her phantas-:magorical speculations, opined that her books were not her own.

In the 18th century, cultivated women found a re-:doubtable champion in the eminently sane Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu. The education of girls and women was a growing pre-:occupation among ladies of thought and discretion, like Lady Mary, and later on Jane Austen, Maria Edgeworth and Elizabeth Hamilton.

Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu in her letters of advice to her daughter the Countess of Bute, on how to educate her children struck at the root of the matter: "but I think it the highest injustice to be debarred the entertainment of my closet/

1) Memoirs of Elizabeth Hamilton by Mrs. Benger, p. 50.

2) The Duchess of Newcastle by Virginia Woolf, p.82, The Common Reader. (Pelican Edition).

closet and that the same studies, which raise the character¹⁾ of a man, should hurt that of a woman".

How vigorous and bitter is her protest hurled at illiberal mankind "We are educated in the grossest ignorance and no art omitted to stifle our natural reason: if some few get above their nurse's instruction, our knowledge must rest concealed and be as useless to the world as gold in the mine".

Her own education, she declared was the wont in the world, "being exactly the same as Clarissa Harlowe's: her pious Mrs. Norton so perfectly resembling our governess".

Reading therefore was the cure. Writing from Venice in 1758, in the year of Mrs. Hamilton's birth, she declared - "I wish your daughters to resemble me in nothing but the love of reading, knowing by experience, how far it is capable of softening the cruellest accidents of life".

Young Elizabeth Hamilton possessed another source of education besides reading, namely, correspondence with her brother Charles. This young man had secured for himself a Cadetship in the East India Company's service in 1772, and his sister's life in the earlier days seemed largely taken up in looking forward to his return or in tending her old uncle, Mr. Marshall, at Ingram's Crook. Her efficiency as a housekeeper, her domestic economy, is reproduced in a character of her /

1) Lady Mary Wortley-Montagu Works - p.31.

her own creating - Harriet Oswell - for she set much 'store by order in education and in household management.

At length, her distinguished and beloved brother arrived in England, to be greeted as the author of a history of the Rohilla Wars; he was also at the time undertaking to translate from the Persian, the Hedaya or Code of Mussulman Laws, a project promulgated by Warren Hastings. As Charles Hamilton was thus attached by sympathy to Mr. Hastings' party, "he was intimately connected with his best friends, many of whom, it is superfluous to observe, were men of brilliant powers or extraordinary attainments. In this polished circle, Miss Hamilton discovered all the charms of novelty and congeniality, and it was here perhaps that she first became alive to the consciousness of her peculiar¹⁾ talents. Her brother too, had encouraged her to take up some literary pursuit.

That autumn, 1791, saw the death of her uncle, Mr. Marshall and so Mrs. Hamilton rejoined her brother and elder sister in London. Her brother's health was worn out with the rigours of his soldierly life; to crown Elizabeth's cup of woe, he died in March 1792. Mrs. Hamilton's appreciation of his merits as a man appeared in her Letters on Education, vol i.

After this grief, she rejoined her sister, together they went on several tours, one of which brought them to Edinburgh.
By /

1) Mémoires (p. 10) of Mrs. Eliz. Hamilton by Mrs. Benger.

By 1800 "The Hindoo Rajah" her "black baby" as she called it in which she paid tribute to her brother in the character of Percy, and "The Modern Philosophers," in which, in the person of Bridgetina, she tilted at Godwinism, had appeared and were apparently much admired. Already, in the latter work, the reforming impulse that lay behind her writing, achieved its effect, for "the author received a most pleasing testimony in a letter from a young woman, evidently of superior talents who confessed she had detected herself in Bridgetina and instantly abjured the follies and absurdities which created the resemblance."¹⁾ To modern readers, this anecdote seems strangely improbable.

In the same year, 1800, Mrs. Hamilton began "Letters on Education", "not to state and explain new truths, but to suggest for those already known a prompt and practical application".²⁾ The first volume was published in 1801: it made Mrs. Hamilton the cynosure, not only of neighbouring eyes. Speaking of a letter she had received from Dugald Stewart, she observes with characteristic simplicity:- "it would be a poor affectation to say that I was not flattered by such praise from a character so distinguished".³⁾

Her next literary effort was the "Memoirs of Agrippina": this work was meant to illustrate further the principles /

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- 1) Memoirs of Mrs. Eliz. Hamilton by Mrs. Benger - p. 132.
 - 2) Memoirs of Mrs. E. Hamilton, p. 133, by Mrs. Benger.
 - 3) Memoirs of Mrs. E. Hamilton, p. 151, by Mrs. Benger.

principles enumerated in "Letters on Education". According to Mrs. Benger, Mrs. Hamilton's biographer, "there can be no doubt that Agrippina (which exhibits in a small compass a correct epitome of Roman laws, customs and manners) is entitled to rank with the best school classics in a young lady's library; and in that view alone must form a valuable addition to English literature"¹⁾.

There was no doubt that a contemporary world was grateful for these long-forgotten moral treatises, for she received a pension from the king. Shortly after this, she returned to Edinburgh and became actively employed with the ladies who had founded the "House of Industry", "a most useful establishment for the education of females of the lowest class"²⁾.

There were lighter moments too:- "I went last night to a ball where I spent my time most pleasantly till one in the morning. I do not believe that either London or Paris saw so much genius in one dance"³⁾.

Like Miss Ferrier, Mrs. Hamilton was afflicted with great pain during the weeks or months of winter, and it was only through tireless patience and energy of will, that she was able to complete her literary works. Thus she used to spend most mornings in bed, only, on every Monday morning, she held a levée attended by the most brilliant in Edinburgh society /

1) Memoirs of Mrs. E. Hamilton, p. 160, by Mrs. Benger.

2) Memoirs (p. 169) of Mrs. E. Hamilton by Mrs. Benger.

3) Memoirs, p. 163, of Mrs. E. Hamilton by Mrs. Benger.

society, where her raciness of humour, dramatic anecdote and warmth of kindness were qualities which attracted all who knew her.

111.

It was at this time between 1804-8 at odd moments and merely "as the amusement of an idle hour"¹⁾ that Mrs. Hamilton commenced "The Cottagers of Glenburnie". The publishers, Manners, Miller and Cheyne wondered how elastic the Scottish sense of humour would prove, as this tale for the Farmer's Ingle-Nook was a comic indictment of Scottish country life. It proved however so popular in cultured circles that a cheap, people's edition, with paper backs and with the artificial framework of the tale removed, was provided for rural communities.

Posterity would disagree with Miss Edgeworth's dictum that "her claims to literary reputation as a philosophic, moral and religious author, are of a higher sort and rest upon works of a more solid and durable nature - upon her works on education, especially her "Letters on Female Education",²⁾ for few read these philosophic outputs to-day, whereas but two generations ago, the "Cottagers of Glenburnie" was a well-thumbed book in most families. "Have you been introduced to the MacClarty family yet? I think they are the most exquisite family group imaginable. Mrs. MacClarty is quite one of your "darlings",³⁾ wrote young Susan Ferrier enthusiastically/

1) Memoirs, p. 169, of Mrs. E. Hamilton by Mrs. Benger.

2) Memoirs (p. 208) of Mrs. E. Hamilton by Mrs. Benger.

3) Correspondence of Susan Ferrier, p. 55, ed. by Doyle.

enthusiastically to Miss Clavering in 1808, the very year of the publication of the Cottagers of Glenburnie.

Mrs. Benger however emphasises the utility rather than the entertainment, derived from such a novel. "Her Cottagers of Glenburnie" she says is a lasting monument of the interest she took in bettering the condition of the poor. Perhaps few books have been more extensively useful. The peculiar humour of this work, by irritating our national pride, has produced a wonderful spirit of improvement. The cheap edition is to be found in every village library: and Mrs. MacClarty's example has provoked many a Scottish housewife¹⁾ into cleanliness and good order".

A human little anecdote comes down to us about this novel, Isabel Irwine, servant girl, who attended Mrs. Hamilton in her childhood, when she was at school in Stirling, circulated her copy of the Cottagers of Glenburnie, charging one penny to each borrower. Through this girl, Mrs. Hamilton had direct contact with the ways of the Scottish peasantry.

In a very fair criticism of the Cottagers of Glenburnie, Jeffrey, in the Edinburgh Review (Vol XII, Art VIII, p. 401) for July 1808, suggests not only the issue of a popular cheap edition, but also that clergymen and resident proprietors in rural districts could introduce its suggested reforms where they were most needed. He warns his polite readers however that /

1) Memoirs, p. 180, of Mrs. E. Hamilton by Mrs. Benger.

that the book relates to the comforts of real cottagers and to the best methods of rearing "honest ploughmen and careful nursery maids".

Although the conditions existing in Scottish rural life had vastly improved in the period 1750-1800, there were from time to time back slidings, due to various reasons, but chiefly perhaps to the laziness that overcame labourers.

The preceptress of this tale is one Mrs. Mason, who comes one day to visit the Stewart family of Gowan-brae in the year 1788. This lady had been the devoted servant of Mr. Stewart's late wife, and was therefore welcomed by that gentleman and his daughter Mary, but less cordially so by his elder daughter, Bell. The social ambitions of this young woman roused Mr. Stewart to great anxiety, but any ill-nature displayed by her towards Mrs. Mason was amply redeemed by Miss Mary's tenderness. Urged by the girl, Mrs. Mason unfolds the story of her life. From the details given, the reader is meant to appreciate the qualities which Mrs. Mason has required through a long and arduous training, for these qualities are opposed, throughout the book by the sins of omission of the Cottagers. From her early training in large houses both in Scotland and in the South (at this time more prominently concerned with hygiene than the north) Mrs. Mason had learned the virtues of cleanliness, order and discipline.

To /

To modern readers, even to Jeffrey, this framework, consisting of an account of Mrs. Mason's life and relations with the Stewarts, is stiff and out of keeping with the lively and natural picture presented by the actual story of the Cottagers. Perhaps, as in Burns's poetry, the vernacular enlivens the tale. Jeffrey recommended the dialect of the Cottagers of Glenburnie as the "purest and most characteristic Scotch", which accentuates the flatness of the English introduction. In this the reader learns that, as an orphan, Mrs. Mason became attached to the household of Longlands at Hill-Castle, where Miss Osborne, Mr. Stewart's wife stayed in the unenviable position of the poor relation. As nursemaid, Mrs. Mason attended the wants of two generations of this family noticing the ill-effects of lack of training, on children, as in the case of Lord Longland's little boy, who was bribed by "secret quantities of sweet-cake, which on account of his stomach he was forbid to eat, or alternately frightened into obedience by tales of hobgoblins".¹⁾

Eventually, Mrs. Mason enters into the service of Lord Longland's second wife, whose children she cares for with good effect.

"From being kindly treated and having their little humours checked in the bud, from a certainty that they would never obtain their object by crying, or by peevishness they were the most docile and tractable little creatures in the world."²⁾

1) p. 53, The Cottagers of Glenburnie, 1st Edition, 1808.
 2) p. 81, " " " " " " "

However, owing to the carelessness of a drunken servant, a fire broke out in the house, and Mrs. Mason, though she became lame for life as a result, with great heroism saved the children and roused the family. On her recovery, she was appointed governess to the Longland children, along with a Swiss woman.

Twelve years after this the benevolent Lord Longlands died, to be succeeded by the son of his first wife, Lord Lintop¹⁾ a man of "cold, reserved temper"; and "a narrow heart", who it seems, had never got over the prejudice against his step-mother fostered in him by a servant, when he was but a child. As my lord had died intestate, the family were dependent on Lord Lintop's generosity, which was not excessive, so that Mrs. Mason found herself without a home, and with only a small pittance on which to live. Having been refused an empty cottage on the Longland estate, on the plan that the earl had decided to demolish all such, Mrs. Mason resolved to settle as lodger with some distant relatives, in the village of Glenburnie. Though Mrs. Mason's kin are afraid the accommodation will not please her, and although the Stewarts try to dissuade her, the indomitable Mrs. Mason decides on a three months trial of the rural comforts of Glenburnie. It is from this point that the novel really comes to life. The preliminary sketch, introducing as it does, some of Mrs. Hamilton's favourite maxims /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 107.

maxims on the importance of early training, on fixed religious principles, on education (the introduction of a Swiss governess may be an echo of Mrs. Hamilton's interest in the method of Pestalozzi) and on domestic economy, prepare the readers for her career of labouring to reform the inveterate, awkward habits of the yokels of Glenburnie.

The introduction to this race of backsliders is graphic and humorous; it forcefully directs the reader's attention to the bad roads which cut off Glenburnie from the outside world rather than connected it to any larger and more progressive community. Mr. Stewart and his family accompanied Mrs. Mason in an Irish car. They traversed a lovely but tangled valley, overgrown with hazel and birch; periodically, Mr. Stewart had to dismount for the road "owed as little to art as any road in the kingdom. It was very narrow, and much encumbered by loose stones, brought down from the hills above, by the winter torrents"¹⁾. The good people of the Glen had made no effort to make the road passable by building a dyke with the loose boulders. But worse was to come, for, as they rounded a sharp bend, they came suddenly upon an overturned cart of hay. The first evidence of life came from the sound of a child's voice in the hollow. "Come on, ye muckle brute! ye had as well come on. I'll gar ye, I'll gar ye, I'll gar ye! That's a gude beast now; come awa! That's it! Ay, ye're a gude beast now"²⁾.

As /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 127.

2) p. 130, The Cottagers of Glenburnie.

"As the last words were uttered, a little fellow of about ten years of age, was seen issuing from the hollow, and pulling after him, with all his might, a great long-backed clumsy animal of the horse species, though apparently of a very mulish temper".

After a short conversation, with this small but shrewd inhabitant, during which Mr. Stewart is told tersely that "the brig brak and the cart couppet", he despatches the young peasant to bring his father from the hayfield, where that indolent is taking in his hay, "ay 'ahint the lave".

When the farmer and his men appear, Mr. Stewart reminds them that he had warned them about the rotten plank in the bridge and showed them how easily it might be repaired. Admitting this to be ture, they replied undaunted that "they wad na fash themselves to mend a brig that was to serve a' the folk in the Glen", and thus flaunted for the first time in the tale the "wad na fash" slogan of Glenburnie. However, as Mr. Stewart pointed out to them, despite their repugnance at neighbourly charity, they must repair it for their own sake, "even though a' the folk in the Glen should be the better for it"¹⁾. This they were reluctantly compelled to admit, and at Mr. Stewart's bidding, soon had the bridge mended.

The Glenburnie cart was probably a rickety affair, though by the end of the eighteenth century, when this tale was supposed to take place, carts were fairly common in the lowlands /

1) Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 132.

lowlands, but in the highlands, women still dragged sledges or bore creels on their backs. According to the Farmer's Magazine for February and May 1806 in 1743 a cart could be had for 7/- by 1800 one cart cost £10.

In 1751, the Turnpike Road Act provided that farmers and proprietors alike should maintain efficient public roads, thus making the transit for carts easier, hence Mr. Stewart was assisting the law in persuading the stubborn Glenburnians to mend the bridge, but to smooth it over with gravel was an added refinement that they could not abide, though promised payment - "ay, ay we'll do't in time but Is'e warrant it'll¹⁾ de weel eneugh".

The party perforce drove on till they reached the village which consisted of about twenty or thirty thatched cottages, which, "but for their chimneys, and the smoke that issued from them, might have passed for so many stables or hog sties".¹⁾ Before every door was the familiar reeking dunghill, and dirty tilted cart.

The kirk was mean, the manse distinguished from other houses in the village, "by a sash window on each side of the door and garret windows above"²⁾, looked so sombre that it seemed deserted, but the village itself swarmed with children, who offered to guide Mrs. Mason and her party to the MacClarty's cottage.

This /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 134.

2). The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 136.

This proved an uninviting habitation to the delicate Mrs. Mason with her inbred notions of cleanliness, the stone and lime walls were black with mud which the cart wheels had spattered from the ruts in winter: the door was completely blocked by the dunghill mound; under the window was a squashy pool formed by dirty water thrown from the house, in which about twenty young ducks were at this time daubing at the threshold of the door; the hollow which should have held the passing-stone, stored water, which served as a fine swimming pool for the younger ducklings.

Mrs. Hamilton may be drawing an extreme case in order to point a moral, but her cottage in fiction was by no means an exception in fact, for Thomas Somerville, writing in "My Own Life and Times" about Scotland between 1741-1800, remarks that persons most liable to epidemics were cottagers "whose houses were surrounded with stagnant water and other abominations, insomuch that during winter it was almost
1)
impossible to approach them dry-shod".

Poor Mrs. Mason was carried by Mr. Stewart over the intervening obstacles, but both of them fell foul of a great whey pot within the threshold, which had stood there since morning, when the cheese had been made: from within it the chickens who had been busily picking "at the bits of curd, which had hardened on the sides and vainly mocked their wishes, flew cackling with hideous din, "some over their heads and others making their way by the pallin (or inner door) into
2)
the house".

1) My Own Life and Times (1714-1814) Thomas Somerville, p.343.
2) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 138.

After this preliminary encounter, with a few additional bruises on the shins, the party assembled in the kitchen, into which Mrs. MacClarty, followed by her daughters, two big girls of eleven and thirteen years of age, bustled breathlessly.

After she had welcomed her guests, Mrs. MacClarty swept the hearth and added turf to the fire, in order to make the kettle boil for tea. On Mrs. Mason observing that her daughters could help her, the Mother replied "we manna¹⁾ complain, they have eneugh of time for work yet". The gawky Meg proceeded to illustrate her mother's maxim by rubbing the wall up and down with her dirty fingers, and Mrs. Hamilton with fine irony here observes:-

"And here let us remark the advantage which our cottages in general possess over those of our southern neighbours; theirs being so whitened up, that no one can have the comfort of laying a dirty hand upon them, without leaving the impression; an inconvenience which reduces people in that station, to the necessity of learning to stand upon²⁾ their legs, without the assistance of their hands."

In the same strain, she solemnly traces the habit either to primitive man walking upon all fours, or to our Pictish ancestors, "conscious of being able to transmit the colour /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 140 .

2) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 141.

colour of their hands to the objects on which they place¹⁾ them".

The apartment in which the visitors sat, served the threefold purpose of kitchen, parlour and bedroom. It boasted a dresser well-stocked with plates and dishes, presumably of pewter, "but so be-dimmed by the quantities of flies that sat upon them",²⁾ that to the onlooker, the metal was difficult to distinguish. On the shelf beside the dresser were a number of delf and wooden bowls with horn spoons. "These, though arranged with apparent care, did not entirely conceal from view the dirty nightcaps, and other articles that were stuffed in behind"³⁾.

In the interests of hygiene, Miss Mary and Mrs. Mason began to rinse the cups and saucers through warm water. The good-natured Mrs. MacClarty proffered a towel, taken from a "store of nice linen" in a huge Dutch press, whereupon Mrs. Mason complimented her, but protested that the damask napkin was too fine for common use.

"For common use!" cried Mrs. MacClarty; "na, na, we're no sic fools as put our napery to use! I have a dizen table-claithes in that press thirty years old that were never laid upon a table. They are a' o' my mither's spinning. I have nine o' my ain makin' forby that never saw the sun but at the bookin washing. Ye needna be telling us of England",⁴⁾ she /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 142.

2) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 143.

3) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 144.

4) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 145.

she added with a flicker of national pride.

On Mrs. Mason suggesting that a nice clean huck-a-back would wipe a cup as well and better, than a damask napkin, Mrs. MacClarty retorted indignantly, "na, na, we mauna pretend to 'towels', we just wipe up the things wi' what comes in the gait"¹⁾, and suiting the action to the word "pulled out from between the seed tub and her husband's dirty shoes, a long blackened rag, and with it rubbed one of the pewter plates with which she stepped into the closet for a roll of butter. On being remonstrated for the marks of a thumb and two fingers on the butter, the good wife cried:- "Dear me! I did na mind that I had been stirring the fire, and my hands were a wee sooty; but it will soon scrape off, there's a dirty knife will take it off in a minute"²⁾.

However she was forestalled in this good office, though Mrs. Mason could not overcome her disgust, when all was done, at the sight of "the numerous hairs which as the butter was spread, bristled up upon the surface".²⁾

Again these observations of Mrs. Hamilton are borne out by travellers. Burt in his Letters, remarks:-

"So contemptuous were the people of cleanliness that it was considered unlucky to wash the kirns; they were so given up to superstition that sometimes a frog was put in the tub to make the milk churn; and they were so full of experimental /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 146.

2) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 147.

experimental wisdom that they maintained that the consistency¹⁾ of the butter depended on the number of hairs it contained."

Like Mrs. Mason, Dorothy Wordsworth having had the experience of English cleanliness, is quick to notice the squalor of houses she entered while on her tour of Scotland with Wordsworth and Coleridge in 1803. Her eye, quick to appreciate the beauty of Scottish scenery and the fine physique and graceful manner of the inhabitants also picks out - "beds with not over-clean bed clothes"; "no other furniture but benches or perhaps one or two crazy chairs, the floors far dirtier than an ordinary house could be if it were never washed" and the plot round the house boasting a few dwarfish potatoes²⁾ sprung from "the dung left by travellers' horses".

Meanwhile Mr. Stewart appealed to the good sense of Mrs. MacClarty about the dirty pool at the door, and suggested that Mrs. Mason would put her upon such a method of doing everything about her house, "as will soon give it a very different appearance"³⁾. This advice alarmed Mrs. MacClarty, who "ay feared she would be owre nice for us. She has been sae lang amang the Englishes that she manna hae a hantel o' outlandish notions. But we are owre auld³⁾ to learn, and we just do well eneugh".

Obstinacy and prejudice were enlisted by Mrs. MacClarty to justify that sloth which was the fundamental cause /

1) Edward Burt - Letters, p. 143.

2) Journal, p. 167 and p. 176, Dorothy Wordsworth.

3) p. 151, The Cottagers of Glenburnie.

cause of all the cottagers' backsliding. Mrs. Mason, a little aghast, but stoutly maintaining her intention of staying for a time, begged to see the room she was to occupy. The incorrigible housewife replied that it was no "in sic order as I could wish, for it's cram fou o' woo'¹⁾; it was put in there the day of the sheep-shearing and we have never ta'en the fash to put it by".

Groping their way to the 'spens' or inner apartment, they duly found the fleeces piled upon the floor and a fusty odour pervading the atmosphere. Mrs. Mason immediately attempted to open the window, but heard for her comfort, that like the other windows in the house, "it was not made to open". "The bed which was opposite to it, was shut up on three sides, like those in the kitchen"²⁾. Again the reader is reminded of "My Own Life and Times" where the Rev. Thomas Somerville records:- "Box-beds still to be seen in cottages from which the air was almost entirely excluded during the night by means of sliding doors, were in general use in spite of all experience of the pernicious effects of this arrangement."³⁾

Yet air, it seemed, was to be dreaded and Mrs. MacClarty could not account for the quantity of moths that were devouring her "abundance of blankets" of her own spinning. "I'm /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 152.

2) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 153.

3) My Own Life and Times (1741-1814) Thomas Somerville, p. 338.

"I'm sure I kenna how they can win in. For no ae breath
o' wind ever blew here"¹⁾.

Even to this day, country folk have an aversion to opening their cottage windows; whether it is because they have their doors open; or because they have a surfeit of air outside; or dread draughts within, it is difficult to decide.

As for the "abundance of blankets", the Rev. Thomas Somerville has a note, that as "English blankets were unknown, so five to ten pairs of blankets were laid
²⁾ on top of the beds".

To Mrs. MacClarty's amazement Mrs. Mason ordered a fire to be kindled and the door to be left open for ventilation, then she gladly left the room with Miss Mary and ventured forth to survey the garden, which was a tangled mass of nettles, suthern wood, thyme, roses, leeks and green kail. The two ladies observed that a fine flower garden and ample kitchen garden could be made, but Mrs. MacClarty contemptuously repudiated the need for any other vegetables, "kickshaws", than green kail. Perhaps Mrs. Hamilton was here thinking of the reluctance of Scots farmers to try new vegetables. As late as 1774, farmers in Dumbartonshire would not sow turnips, although bribed.

The farmer now appeared from the field, and Mr. Stewart, refusing a taste of his whisky, set off with his family for home. Mrs. Mason found the master of the house a /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 154.
2) My Own Life and Times - (1741-1814) Thomas Somerville, p.338

a man possessed of "plain good sense and a greater stock of information than she could have supposed within his reach"¹⁾. The rationality of "the common people" in Scotland as Sydney Smith had remarked, was borne out by Farmer Mac Clarty.

So devout were the family prayers and so delicious was the supper of sowens and milk and new potatoes, that Mrs. Mason retired for the night in hopeful frame of mind, The bed looked quite inviting with "the delicate whiteness" of the linen, but "no sooner had her head reached the pillow than she became sick, for the new feathers in the pillow had not been properly dried and were consequently "full of the animal oil, which when it becomes rancid, sends forth an intolerable effluvia"²⁾.

When this annoyance was removed, she was attacked with dexterity by the merciless and agile foe "for the rest of the night"³⁾.

In the morning, she awoke exhausted, to find neither ewer nor basin nor water in her bedroom. On entering the kitchen, she beheld Meg and Jean malingering, killing flies or daubing their fingers in the spilt milk on the table. Their mother suddenly appeared and attempted to coax them to leave these congenial tasks and to set out for school.

Meg /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 159.

2) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 162.

3) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 163.

Meg sulkily departed, but Jean morosely refused, because she had not "gotten" her questions. They had been "unco kittle" and she "could not be fashed". Thus she won the day. Mrs. Mason was aghast at such a dereliction of the parental authority but Mrs. MacClarty turned the subject with:- "Hoot, maidens' bairns are aye weel-bred, ye ken, cousin",¹⁾ and thereupon proffered Mrs. Mason either a porridge plate or the "calf's luggie" as a washing utensil, modifying her amazement at Mrs. Mason's passion for cleanliness, by recalling that - "The gudeman indeed is a wee conceity, like yoursel', an' he coft a brown basin for his shaving in on Saturdays, but it's in use a' the week haddin' milk or I'm sure ye'd be welcome to it".²⁾

Mrs. Mason, in a medley of emotions, accepted the calf's bicker, the beast being "so much the cleaner animal than his mistress".³⁾

The fastidious paying-guest might well lose heart, but not so, Mrs. Mason, who, by bribing Grizzy, the servant lass, soon had her own room cleaned out, and was preparing to remove the dust and grime from the kitchen window, when⁴⁾ an emphatic "it does weel eneugh" from Mrs. MacClarty put an end to any profitable activity.

Undaunted /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 168.

2) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 171.

3) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 171.

4) " " " " p. 176.

Undaunted, Mrs. Mason, that indefatigable reformer, turned her attention to the refractory race of young MacClartys. Again she met with obstinate opposition from Mrs. MacClarty, on the score that her "bairns were just like other folks". The farmer had better sense, but enquired of Mrs. Mason: "Do ye think corrupt nature can be subdued in ony other way¹⁾ than by the grace of God?"

At this point, Mrs. Hamilton is making a direct attack on the deeply-rooted convictions regarding the "elect" of God, notions jealously nourished by the peasantry of Scotland throughout the eighteenth century, though chiefly in the early years. This belief that some were specially "chosen" by God, well suited the lazy habits of the peasants, who were quite resigned when fields went to waste and regarded this as a token of the wrath of God rather than of their own sloth.

Next morning however she awoke to the "harsh sound²⁾ of discord" and discovered that a violent dispute had taken place between the farmer and his eldest son. "The voices stopped; and proceeding, she saw the farmer hastily unsaddling a horse; the son at the same moment issuing from the door, but pulled back by his mother, who held the skirt of his coat, saying: 'I tell ye', Sandie, ye manna gang to anger your father". After further altercation, Mrs. Mason enquired the /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 182.

2) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 195.

the cause:- "Where is the young man for going to?" Where-
 :upon Mrs. MacClarty, all her innate prejudice against her
 genteel cousin, coming out, changed her tone, to one of
 angry defiance:- "Where sud he be for gain' to but to the
 fair?" returned the mother: "it's only natural. But our
 gudeman's unco particular and never lets the lads get ony
 daffin"¹⁾.

"Daffin!" cried the farmer, "is druckenness daffin?
 Did na he gang last year and come hame as drunk as a beast?
 And ye wad have him tak the brown mare too, without ever
 spearing my leave! saddled and bridled too, forsooth; like
 ony gentleman in the land! But ye sal baith repent it; I
 tell ye, ye'se repent it."²⁾

There is no denying the force and realism of this
 conversation: Mrs. Hamilton has caught the living accents of
 an angry and upright countryman, who sees in these fairs,
 many of them pagan in origin, an opportunity for license.
 The farmer and his son here parted in anger, the latter still
 determined to go to the fair - "a' the folk in the Glen are
 gain' and I'll gang too, say what ye wull"³⁾.

"Mrs. Mason had discernment enough to see how much
 pride there was in that pretended contentment, which constantly
 repelled every idea of improvement. She saw that though Mrs.
 MacClarty took no pains to teach her children what was truly
 useful, she encouraged, with respect to them, an undefined
 sentiment /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 196.
 2) " " p. 197
 3) " " p. 198

34

sentiment of ambition which persuaded her, that her children were born to rise to something great, and that they would in time overtop their neighbours".¹⁾

From this point onward, as Jeffrey wrote in his review, Mrs. Hamilton achieved "great effect and discrimination of the more serious results of sloth" for the idle and sullen Sandie does go to the fair, is there made helplessly drunk and in that state, enlisted for the army.²⁾

The father, on his way to the neighbouring town to buy his son off from enlistment is waylaid, assaulted and robbed, With painful difficulty, he makes his way back to the glen, a broken and dying man, for very soon an infectious fever sets in.

Now Mrs. Mason had to cope with the crowded room, helpless relatives and home-made cures, for Mrs. MacClarty would on no account risk "offending any of her neighbours, by refusing admittance to his bedside".³⁾ The fever in consequence, increased, and Mrs. Mason, perceiving it to be dangerous besought them to send for a doctor. "But Mrs. MacClarty acceded to the general opinion that it would be time enough to send when he became worse". "Auld John Smith" was represented as having as "mickle skeel as ony doctor amang them".⁴⁾

In /

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- 1) p. 208, The Cottagers of Glenburnie.
 - 2) Edinburgh Review, Vol XII, Art VIII. July 1808. p. 401.
 - 3) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 223.
 - 4) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 224.

In spite of 'auld' John Smith's infallible remedies of bleeding herb-poultices and warm drinks the farmer became worse. "When he was past all hope the doctor was sent for, who passed his opinion that they had done all they could to kill the farmer and that he would not probably live above three days, unless he was removed from the close box bed"¹⁾.

No sooner had the doctor gone, than the neighbours poured in. It was the custom of the times:- "People filled the small rooms in pious belief that no one could hasten or hinder a death"²⁾.

A loud outcry was raised against removing the farmer into Mrs. Masons clean, airy room. "If it's the wull o' God that he's to dee" said Peter Macglashon, the parish oracle, "it's ane whar ye tak him. Ye canna hinder the wull o' God"³⁾. To which Mrs. Mason replied that "when we do not use the reason he has bestowed upon us, we are at once guilty of disobedience and presumption".

"That's no sound doctrine", said Peter, "it's the law of works"⁴⁾.

"No" returned Mrs. Mason, "it's the law of faith, to which we show our obedience by works".

And thus they went on, hammer and tongs, round the/

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 226.

2) Henry Grey Graham - "Social History of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century" - p. 185.

3) p. 228, The Cottagers of Glenburnie.

4) p. 228, The Cottagers of Glenburnie.

3

the good man's death-bed, until Mrs. Mason at last persuaded them that the fever was infectious, and secured the support of an intelligent pale-faced man named Morrison, who offered her a bed in his house, as by this time Mrs. MacClarty and Robert the second son, had succumbed to the malady.

After this, tragedy touches the house of MacClarty and an affecting scene is described round the farmer's death bed, when Sandie, the prodigal, rushes in to find a hiding place, as he has deserted. He receives his dying father's blessing, just as the corporal and his men burst in to seize him. The presence of the minister restrains them from executing their arrest with violence, and the pathos of the whole scene with the raving mother and weeping children subdues and humanises them.

Mention of the French as enemies in this chapter, and the heading of the next chapter - "The doctrine of Liberty and Equality stripped of all seditious import" are the only echoes from the outside world, then shaken by the tremendous convulsion of the Napoleonic War, that are heard in Glenburnie.

As in the society depicted in the novels of Jane Austen, Susan Ferrier, and Maria Edgeworth, the world of Glenburnie is a little remote one, entirely engrossed in its own petty affairs, and only rarely, as in the adventure of Sandie, affected by major events.

The funeral of the farmer, gives Mrs. Hamilton the opportunity, to describe the real sorrow shown at the good man's /

man's death, compared with the empty pomp attending the obsequies of the great. "The hoary-headed elders, who had the place of honour next the corpse, thought as they looked on it, on the unblemished life of him who had been so long their associate in its duties; and wept for the man in whom they hoped their children's children would have found a friend".¹⁾

After the farmer's death, there was no hope of mental regeneration for the MacClartys, who steadily resisted Mrs. Mason's attempts at reform, and as steadily resented a sense of obligation, for her manifold acts of kindness. Through her influence, as she knew the major of Sandie's regiment, the sentence of death for the deserter was commuted to service overseas in the East Indies. Even for this office there was only temporary gratitude, and Mrs. Mason noticing the sulky antipathy of Robert, the second son, now master of the farm, the returning indolence and pertness of the girls, and the weak indulgence of the mother, signified her intention of changing her lodging and of moving to the worthy Morrisons. Both Mrs. MacClarty and Robert were taken aback, even vexed, at this decision, but would not admit even to themselves that their own ignorance and pride were at the root of their dislike.

In the Morrison's extremely poor but clean abode, Mrs. Mason found ample scope for her benevolence, and soon, with the Minister's aid, assisted the delicate William Morrison to /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 252.

to start as village schoolmaster. In this section of the tale, Mrs. Hamilton has opportunity to discuss the duties of schoolmasters, her abhorrence of pedantry, the need for careful instruction in reading, in a natural and distinct manner as opposed to the roaring and singing of texts as performed in most country schools. Morals too, should not be neglected, for a schoolmaster's first object should be "to train his pupils to habits of order and subordination, not by means of terror, but by a firmness which is not incompatible with kindness and affection".¹⁾

She passes many wise remarks on discipline, stressing her belief that no child ever complained of punishment, when sensible that it was just, and that if work was well regulated, no slothful children could find outlet in disorder and mischief. Mr. Gourlay, the minister, on whose lips, Mrs. Hamilton puts these treatises on educational methods and on religious teaching, cites an Irish schoolmaster, Mr. David Manson, who wrote an account of his "play-school" - "the regulations of which are so excellent, that every scholar must have been made insensibly to teach himself, while he all the time considered himself as assisting the master in teaching others. All were thus at the same time actively engaged; but so regulated, as to produce not the least confusion or disturbance".²⁾

Having absorbed such excellent theories, Mr. Morrison the /

1) p. 373, The Cottagers of Glenburnie.

2) p. 375, The Cottagers of Glenburnie.

the broken merchant and Mrs. Mason ex-nursery governess, made a great success of their school. The school-house was repaired and thoroughly cleaned; a garden was created round the house, which became a source of pleasure to the older boys when allowed to rear and water shrubs, plants and flowers, and the school-room itself became a model partitioned for the two main sections, the boys and the girls. Manson's methods were applied, whereby the classes were divided into landlords and tenants and sub-tenants, the landlords being responsible to the master not only for their own diligence but for the diligence of their vassals. This type of instruction seems to anticipate project methods in junior schools of to-day, and has a touch of novelty which would probably appeal to children.

William Morrison, as master of the parish school of Glenburnie, was luckier than most men in that position. In 1782, for the second time in that century, the schoolmasters of Scotland banded themselves to frame a memorial, which they submitted to Parliament. (A Memorial made previously in 1748 had failed to achieve any effect)

"90 years have produced such a change and so great an improvement in agriculture, navigation, commerce, arts and riches of the country that £15 sterling per annum at the end of the last century may be considered a better income than £45 at the present time. Suppose then, that in Scotland there are 900 parochial schoolmasters which is near the truth; 800 /

800 of them will be found struggling with indigence, inferior in point of income to 800 day labourers in the best cultivated parts of the island and receiving one half of the emoluments of the menial servants of country gentlemen." ¹⁾

The honest dignity and indignation voiced in this protest eventually achieved its purpose. In 1802, the Schoolmasters' Act provided that incomes were not to fall under 300 merks (£16:13: 4) nor to rise above 400 merks (£22: 4: 6) and that heritors should grant schoolhouses containing two rooms with ground not less than a Scots acre. Even so this parsimonious fare was grudged, for Lord Cockburn records:- "Hope (Lord Advocate) told me that he had considerable difficulty in getting even two rooms and that a great majority of the lairds and Scotch members were indignant at being obliged to erect 'palaeus for dominies'" ²⁾.

Thus William Morrison was residing in Glenburnie in comparative affluence.

The girls were instructed mainly in domestic subjects, and in reading. Mrs. Mason first had to contend with minds become torpid with working at the mechanical labour of the wheel, realising that monotony breeds boredom and stupidity.

During this time, Mrs. Mason had been able to help her old friends the Stewarts at Gowan-brae. The elder Miss Stewart had eloped with one, Mr. Mollins a gamester, whom she /

1) Henry Grey Graham - Social Life in Scotland in the Eighteenth Century" - p. 446.

2) p. 186, Memorials - Lord Cockburn.

she imagined to be a gentleman of quality, but who proved to be the son of a shoe-maker. However, Mrs. Mason managed to reconcile all parties by revealing that Mollins, though he had been foolish, was not really dishonourable or knavish. By the interest of his wife's cousin, an honest manufacturer, Mollins found employment under government on condition that he and his wife should live in retirement.

Thus helping all and blessed by all, Mrs. Mason spent a peaceful life in Glenburnie. Her old employers; the Meritons succeeded to the estate and title of Longlands, and left no doubt as to their attachment to Mrs. Mason.

"The friendship of Mrs. Mason was therefore considered of great importance by those who in any way depended on the favour or protection of their superior lord"¹⁾.

However, prejudice takes long to die out; Mrs. MacClarty and her cronies held out stubbornly against the "pride of innovation"²⁾. The village now presented a picture of neatness and beauty, with clear glass windows peeping through the foliage of rose trees and the flowering shrubs, pot-herbs and goodly rows of bee-hives.

Meanwhile the MacClarty family continued on the downward grade. Rob married the daughter of a notorious smuggler, quarrelled with and turned out his mother and sisters who were forced to go to a neighbouring town to find employment under a manufacturer in flowering muslin. There /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 393.

2) " " " " p. 395.

There Meg had an intrigue with one of the workmen, and Jean was little better, so that their mother had small comfort in them, as Mrs. Hamilton said.

Though much of the tale could be omitted, the sketch of Glenburnie is masterly, and the picture of the MacClarty household, riding for a fall, over dung hills "couppet" carts, and dirty water, almost grimly humorous and certainly grimly faithful in detail. The whole novel is a little chronicle of the time; the age of progress had touched Glenburnie, the "gude auld gait" were of the past. Most fully drawn of all the characters, is Mrs. MacClarty, a cheerful and stubborn slattern until her ways are challenged, and then resentful, weak and vindictive because of her innate pride.

"Eh!" returned Mrs. MacClarty, "but to hae a flower garden whar' gude Mr. Brown's middenstead stood sappy for mony a day!"

"The flowers are a hantel bonnier than the midden¹⁾ tho', and smell a hantel sweeter too, I trow", returned Mrs. Smith.

Thus the voice of progress made itself heard in Glenburnie, through one of its most inveterate sticklers, and the curtain was rung down on the bad old MacClarty days.

IV /

1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, p. 396.

IV.

To modern readers, this is a curious book; moral purpose is at the root of the whole novel, but is expressed in two distinct modes; the opening chapters, painfully formal as ¹⁾ Jeffrey noted, show the advantages for servants of a training like that given to English domestics; all the liveliness and humour are kept for disclosing later on, the shortcomings of Scottish rural life.

Thus the Cottagers of Glenburnie is an early expression in Scotland (1808) of the literary vogue for the moral tale then prevailing in England and in France, but in addition, this Scottish work has its own contribution to bring. Mrs Mason, the paragon servant-cum-nursery governess is a cousin of those good French ladies and gentlemen of the Contes Moraux of Marmontel - and of those virtuous beings and children of Maria Edgeworth - The Parents' Assistant and Other Tales, but Mrs. MacClarty is a genus of her own. Marmontel's Tales abound in Bad and Good Mothers, Husbands, Fathers, Sons and Daughters, but the bad members of the community invariably turn good, and there is ultimately deep respect for parental authority, sensibility (a word on which the 18th century dwelt with affection) and a touching belief in human perfectibility.

In the MacClarty family, however, there is no hope of /

1) Edinburgh Review - Vol XII, Art. VIII. p.401, July 1808.

of reform - dirt and disobedience are there to stay and are described with intense realism bordering on burlesque; however the prolonged ill-effects of sloth and license turn humour into tragedy and Mrs. Hamilton with stern relish and in true Scottish fashion, furnishes grim particulars of their downfall.

The sudden tragic turn and overwhelmingly black record of the MacClarty's - painful death of the father; drunkenness and desertion of the son; immorality of the daughter, seem to anticipate a genus of Scottish novels almost morbidly preoccupied with squalor. It is not a far
 1) cry from Glenburnie to the township of Barbie and thence to
 2) Hatter's Castle. Lewis Grassie Gibbon, Neil Gunn, Frederick Niven and George Blake have also shown themselves to be irresistibly drawn to sombre landscape. But in most of these novels, the moral bent has entirely disappeared and the art of the novelist is expended on creating the personality
 2) that embodies all the evil of its surroundings. Thus Brodie is not a man, but an incarnation of ugly, powerful forces, not of human but of demoniac energy, and with him, the reader has passed far beyond the bounds of realism.

The pent up energy of Scottish literature found outlet after 1920, and recrudescence in this novel type which channelled all that was grotesque even morbid in the Scotch tradition.

1) "The House with the Green Shutters", George Douglas Brown.

2) By Dr. Cronin.

C H A P T E R I I I .

S U S A N F E R R I E R

I Novels composed during transition period for Scotland. Old Highland feudal families disappearing: rise of new class due to Industrial Revolution - the artisans. English inclinations of the cultured classes. Result - lack of homogeneous reading public: effect on growth of Scottish novel. Susan Ferrier's range - narrow: only concerned with pretensions of middle class and decay of Highland lairds. Her novels full of eccentric characters often drawn from real models. Many oddities in contemporary society appearing in correspondence of literary figures of the time. No consistent picture of Scottish national life in Susan Ferrier's novels; rather satire of contemporary manners. Comparison with the English Jane Austen and Irish Maria Edgeworth. Predecessor - Fanny Burney. Experimental stage of domestic novel during Susan Ferrier's and Maria Edgeworth's careers. No classic model for them to follow. Maria Edgeworth's use of Irish national element gives a quality lacking in Susan Ferrier. Susan Ferrier's acute sense of the ridiculous: has not the balance of Maria Edgeworth: advantage of compact Irish society from which to draw. Neither novelist could construct a good plot. Maria Edgeworth's humour mellow than Susan Ferrier's who is inexorable in her satire. Scottish scenes portrayed only sporadically, due to her absorption in eccentric characters.

II Susan Ferrier's letters reveal stages in her novel construction. Edinburgh - good hunting ground for grotesques. Ferriers' connections with noble families - viz. the Campbells. Character of her father James Ferrier. Miss Clavering - her literary correspondent: stages in the composition of "Marriage" as revealed in letters to and from Miss Clavering. Opening scenes - promising situation. Lack of realism when scene moves to England in second part of Marriage. Organic faults in plot. Lady Campbell's praise. Humour and character sketches of Marriage, Types:- Lady Maclaughlan: Dr. Redgill, Uproarious comedy yet conventional sentiment. Anti-romantic attitude: elements of caricature: mimicry and ridicule of living persons: "self-sufficiency of the Scot". Pathos of the Maclaughlan episode. Susan Ferrier - "a feminine Swift." Realism of inset sketch of Mrs. Violet MacShake: other satiric touches: the lowland farm: the blue-stocking salon. The character of Emily. Burial of the Laird. Blackwood, publisher of Marriage. Praise from Sir Walter Scott.

III The Inheritance: good but melodramatic plot - account of same. Tone of book - elevated above that of Marriage. Gertrude, the heroine - convincing, but not her sisters. Delmour - gentleman-villain type cf. Sir Ulick O'Shane in Maria Edgeworth's Ormond and Lovelace in Clarissa Harlowe. Lyndsay - paragon: mouthpiece of Susan Ferrier. Uncle Adam - based on Susan Ferrier's father: Miss Bell Black - castigation of pretentious small-town Scotswoman. Major Waddell - the Nabob type, Miss Lilly Black - vulgarity of middle /

III (Contd.)

middle-class: their affected speech - Lord Rossville pompous party man. Miss Pratt - satire on the poor but prying relative: her garrulity cf. Miss Bates. Mrs. St. Clair and Lewiston - melodramatic characters. Satiric scenes loosely connected with the novel - Fairbairn family at home: Miss Betty Duguid's occupations. Only distinctive Scottish scene with poor tenant on Rossville Estate; but best character - Uncle Adam is typically Scots.

IV Destiny: written when older and in ill-health.

Subject - decay of Highland laird. Glenroy. Account of plot: return to former disconnected gallery series: types no longer original. Disintegration furthered by rift in plot. Spirit of resignation throughout in keeping with Miss Ferrier's mood at the time of composition. Lockhart's praise of the study of Glenroy. Amplification of Glenfern in Marriage. Comparison between Glenroy and King Corny in Marion Edgeworth's novel - Ormond. Comparison of the French woman Madame Latour in Destiny with Mlle O'Foley in Ormond and Madame Duval in Evelina, Mrs. Macaulay faithful retainer types: Caricatures of M'Dow and Benbowie.

V. Assessment of Susan Ferrier as novelist: suffers in comparison with Jane Austen with regard to the novelist's art. Attempts a kind of tragic conflict. Best at satiric portrait of eccentrics: in line of Smollett, Comparison with Fanny Burney. Can be most justly compared with Maria Edgeworth.

SUSAN FERRIER (1782-1854)

MARRIAGE	1818
THE INHERITANCE	1824
DESTINY	1831

I

INTRODUCTION

It has been said by her grand-nephew John Ferrier, that Susan Ferrier lived in a society that was "compact and homogeneous enough to be carefully studied, varied and animated enough to be thoroughly interesting, grotesque enough in some of its phases to give full scope to vigorous and even extravagant humour."¹⁾ To be born then in 1782, and to live some seventy-two years observing that little world with undeceived eyes, was surely a happy lot for a novelist of contemporary manners.

Yet the task was not as simple as it seems. Susan Ferrier's three novels - Marriage (1818), The Inheritance (1824), and Destiny (1831), because of their chief characters and their setting, must be regarded as studies in Scottish manners, but, though the best touches in them are undeniably Scottish, these books do not give a whole nor a consistent picture of contemporary Scottish life. Their inequality is no doubt partly due to defective structure, but a deeper reason for it, is to be found /

1) Memoir and Correspondence of Susan Ferrier edited by John A. Doyle, page 22.

found in the fabric of Scottish society. Susan Ferrier's own immediate circle might be "compact and homogeneous enough to be carefully studied", but this was not the case with the population at large.

As has been observed in the preceding chapter, the end of the 18th century and the opening years of the 19th century in Scotland were a formative period. Old orders were passing away, as for instance, the feudalism of the Highlands, Crofters, who had emerged after the suppression of the Jacobites, from a semi-feudal state of serfdom under chiefs, were now faced with poverty as free tacksmen; had their holdings enclosed for sheep-farming and flocked to the towns or emigrated to the colonies. Their chiefs, bearing the once epic names of Gaeldom, were metamorphosed into haggling landlords, as such, they were often supplanted by industrious merchants and traders who had "made good" and who now became the new lairds.

Impetus was given to the New Order by the Industrial Revolution and by the doctrines of the French Revolution. Factories, springing up in various localities, but chiefly in the midlands, encouraged the growth of an artisan population with an outlook on life and a set of values differing greatly from those of the hand-worker and craftsman of the previous generation.

Lastly, amid the Scottish men of culture, scientists, physicians, philosophers, literati, the men and women of taste and fashion, there were many who had a nostalgic longing for the South. English tongue and manners, even dress, they emulated - native models they distrusted.

The rootlessness of this society defied Susan Ferrier. Of these varying levels of Scottish life, the sombre existence of the factory workers, for example, is entirely omitted from her novels. The Industrial Revolution does not cast over her books the shadow that occasionally falls on the novels of John Galt, who comments on the "long white faces in the Trongate"¹⁾ where lived the weavers and other hard-wrought cotton-workers. The only big social change which she touches on, is the decaying status of the Highland chiefs, in her last novel - "Destiny",²⁾ otherwise, she is content, as a mistress of the "Little Language" to observe the pretensions of the growing middle classes and the affectations among the upper classes. Particularly severe are her strokes against the "Bell Blacks",³⁾ who aim with stilted precision at standard English. Indeed, her utter ruthlessness with vulgarity of that kind, bears out Professor Saintsbury's remark that though she decries rank and fashion as vanity, "she is secretly of Major Pendennis's mind as to the value of good acquaintances".⁴⁾

Her only attempt at showing a very humble and humble Scottish life is in her novel "Inheritance", when Gertrude, her heroine, in the role of Lady Bountiful, visits the cottage of one of her poorer tenants, whose wife is more anxious about the dead "claes" than about her dying husband. The treatment of this scene is so macabre, that the reader feels it has been introduced, /

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- 1) Vol I. "The Annals of the Parish", p.194 ed. by Meldrum and Roughead.
 - 2) The Academy. Vol. 56, p. 152
 - 3) "The Inheritance"
 - 4) The Collected Essays and Papers, Vol.1. by Prof. Saintsbury, p. 305.

introduced, not to portray the life of a Scottish peasant, but for the sake of its strong, grim humour and pitiless exposure of yet another eccentric. Human oddities indeed, always tempted her pen, and it is true to say that the best Scottish portraits that exist in the novels, both of Sir Walter Scott and of his "sister shadow"¹⁾ as he called Susan Ferrier, are those of "the originals".

Perhaps, a love for presenting such characters arose from their abounding presence in contemporary society. Those were the days, in the early part of the 19th century, when a Miss Clementina Stirling Grahame of Duntrune could masquerade at Edinburgh dinner-parties and by her grip of genealogy and the law take in Mr. Jeffrey and even Sir Walter Scott himself, with her "Mystifications". Cockburn's "Memories", Mrs. Grant of Laggan's letters and Susan Ferrier's correspondence are throughout enlivened by descriptions of many picturesque human oddities, (like the famed Miss Menie Trotter) the originals of Peter Peebles, Mrs. Baliol Bethune, Uncle Adam and Lady Maclaughlan, to mention only a few of that honourable race. "Strong-brained and strong-hearted"²⁾, Dr. John Brown calls the generation of Sir Walter Scott and Susan Ferrier, and there is an equivalent whole-hearted gusto in their literary work.

A series of brilliant but disconnected thumb-sketches of quaint characters however does not constitute a novel of national manners. Apart from his "Chronicles of the Canongate", which were undertaken "as an olla podrida into which any species of/
of/

1) Epilogue of Tales of My Land.

2) "Mystifications" edited by J. Brown, M.D. 1865. p. IX.

3) Sir W. Scott's "Journal", May 28th, 1826.

of narrative or discussion may be thrown", Sir Walter Scott in his great novels found a way of amalgamating the elements of the Scottish scene. He turned to the past. There could be some confidence in assessing the Scotland of history; heroic deeds and characters were the highlights, thrown into bold relief by subsidiary but powerful sketches of humble folk bearing traits which the author felt from his own observation, endured from age to age, and could be accepted universally as Scottish.

But for a novelist like Susan Ferrier who intended to portray contemporary manners, there was no common denominator to Scotland's heterogeneous society. Her heroine type in "Marriage" is "to combine the frankness of the Scotch with the polished reserve of the Englishwoman" - surely two frankly opposed qualities. Again, the cry that is repeated in her novels is - "the changing manners of the times"; she catches the echo from the passing generation; she senses, even disapproves, of much that is new, but she fails to blend the two into a consistent picture.

By the time that Marriage was published in 1818, Miss Jane Austen in England had had four of her novels published. This authoress had delicately and incisively cut a slice from contemporary English life, engraving for all time in English letters 'the small gentry' of parsonage and parkland - unmistakably English from whatever shire they hailed.

In Ireland, there was Maria Edgeworth, writing of a society that was more comparable with that of Scotland. Her "admirable Irish portraits" Sir Walter suggested in his postscript to Waverley, he tried "in some distant degree to emulate". Because /

Because of the conditions of their respective countries, Maria Edgeworth and Susan Ferrier were writing as novelists¹⁾ "of manners and character at a transition time, when manners and character had come out of one stage and had not settled into another". Moreover the domestic novel which had its origin in Fanny Burney's "Evelina" (1778) did not attain full maturity until the appearance of *Vanity Fair* in 1848, so that it was in the experimental stage during the lifetime of these two authoresses, and, as they did not limit their scope as did Jane Austen, for them, there was no classic model to follow. Both show the disadvantages of this, but Maria Edgeworth, by her use of the national element in *Castle Rackrent* (1801) *The Absentee* and *Ormond*, overcame them in a way Susan Ferrier was never able to do. A Scot like Smollett and Dr. John Moore, Susan Ferrier was gifted with an almost uncomfortable faculty of sensing the ludicrous; Maria Edgeworth too did not neglect farcical opportunities, but she was sensitive to all the notes in the Irish scale.

She presents to her readers the two great strata of the Irish race - gay sometimes dissolute landowners, hard-gaming, hard-drinking, and being Irish, hard-riding, and their shrewd tenantry. Yet there is a harmony between these two classes; they are interdependent; especially alive is the peasantry to the weaknesses of their betters. How loyal they are, like honest Thady in *Castle Rackrent*, yet how lovingly do they swindle /

1) Channels of English Literature - Prof. Saintsbury, p. 183

swindle their Sir Kits and Sir Conollys. Of King Corny, that essential Irishman in Ormond, Macaulay said in a note to his History of England:- "whoever has studied that admirable portrait can form some notion of what King Corny's great-grandfather must have been." The perennial Irish traits are there and are shown consistently throughout the three novels mentioned; the compactness of this society is as unmistakable as its nationality.

Like her own Sir Herbert Annaly in Ormond, Maria Edgeworth often "spoke sense" to her readers, and this "sense" is painfully moralistic at times, in the French 18th century manner. Susan Ferrier was to succumb to this fault as well. Another weakness they had in common was their inability to manage a plot, but both novelists did possess a lively fund of humour.

Perhaps in Maria Edgeworth the wit predominates over the humour: laughter and good jokes and sly ridicule are natural to the Irish, and, as has been said, the times of Maria Edgeworth and Susan Ferrier were particularly conducive to practical joking - even to literary horseplay. The robust comedy of Fielding too was in Maria Edgeworth's mind: she was cheerfully aloof from her characters in a way Susan Ferrier could never be. The mordant humour of the Scot, as opposed to the live wit of the Irish, brought Miss Ferrier close up to her subject; she never winced nor spared a stroke, but pursued her victim like Nemesis, till the modern reader almost dreads the extremes of humiliation to which her fidelity will carry her.

This absorption in grotesques, a curiously Scottish trait, inevitably checks the flow of the story. The eccentrics are /

are not part of the organism of the plot, and so the best Scottish scenes and characters are portrayed sporadically. Perhaps a model for this disconnected treatment of characters may be found in La Bruyère whom Susan Ferrier apparently admired, for quotations from his works adorn the chapter headings to her novels. *Les Caractères*, treating in self-contained maxims of conversation of the court, etc., has naturally no connected plan. An attraction in Susan Ferrier's eyes would be its moral bent, resembling that of the *Maxims* of La Rochefoucauld and *Les Pensées* of Pascal, La Bruyère, departing from the traditions of 17th century French prose, belonged to the classicism of the reign of Louis XIV and was anticipating the age of reason. Yet Susan Ferrier's art more nearly resembles that of Balzac than of La Bruyère for whereas the latter was searching for faults common to all men - the former concentrated on abnormal individuals. La Bruyère's was however an intellectual game which Susan Ferrier no doubt enjoyed, for though she herself did not portray the Scots as a race as Maria Edgeworth did the Irish, she had a greater intellectual grasp and a stronger pen than the Irishwoman.

II

Mrs Ferrier's letters reveal the novelist's workmanship. The concentration of a vital society in Edinburgh had a definite effect on her art, for in such a circumscribed world, each so knew his neighbour that a satiric pen portrait needed no footnotes. An amazing variety of personality was also possible, for the society /

society was richly diversified and many facets of the same character presented themselves to separate observers.

Susan Ferrier moved in distinguished circles in fact she had "a hantel o' quality amang her aquantans"¹⁾. She herself came of a good family of small landowners in Renfrewshire, her father James Ferrier, a Writer to the Signet, was in time appointed one of the principal Clerks of Session and had as colleague in the Session House, Sir Walter Scott who appreciated the Spartan qualities of the old man. Susan Ferrier has left a memoir of her father's early life. An outcome of his connections with the legal profession was the enduring friendship formed with one of his principal clients, John, Duke of Argyll, who was largely instrumental in securing his appointment as Session Clerk. The house of Argyll was an open one to the Ferriers and a most important attachment, that had constructive influence on her literary work, was formed between the novelist and the ladies of that house - Miss Clavering and Lady Charlotte Campbell, sister of the fifth Duke of Argyll. Indeed, it was Lady Charlotte who introduced²⁾ "the contagion of proof sheets" into that circle. Here then, was first-hand acquaintance with lords and ladies and with an interesting old Highland House at Inverary. The "gentry"³⁾ constantly pass in and out of the letters:- "I've just seen Lord John about half a minute since he came here. Bessie Mure keeps him in her 'ridicule' and never lets anybody get a peep at him."

Perhaps, however, despite Sir Walter Scott's efforts to /

1) Memoir and Correspondence, ed. Doyle, p. 79.

2) Macmillan's Magazine. Vol. 79, p. 419.

3) Memoir and Correspondence, ed. Doyle, p. 81.

to renew royal pageantry with the entry of George IV into Edinburgh, brilliant society tended to congregate in London, and though a certain style was kept up in the Scottish capital, it was celebrated with depleted ranks and a kind of anxious gentility. The Miss Claverings of the day enjoyed their London season.

In her early letters therefore, Susan Ferrier is seen "busied in the Arts and Sciences of japanning old boxes, varnishing new ones, daubing velvet, and in short, as the old wives way, my hands never out of an ill turn. Then by way of fashion I play whist every night to the very death with all the fusty dowagers and musty mousers in the purlieus - and yet I am alive! Praise¹⁾ be to oysters and porter."

So much mental vitality was ready to be harnessed and there was a natural aptitude for writing.

"For know I am descended from a race of Scribes. I was²⁾ born amidst briefs and deeds. I was nurtured upon ink;"

Perhaps it was Miss Clavering, who, enjoying the vivacity of those early letters, foresaw in Susan Ferrier a novelist. Round about the years 1809-10, when Susan Ferrier, according to well-qualified opinion, had grown quite handsome, vastly sensible and agreeable, there were hints in her correspondence of an interesting new project.

"Your proposals flatter and delight me, but how in the³⁾ name of postage are we to transport our brains to and fro?"

Apparently /

1) Memoir and Correspondence, p. 74

2) Memoir and Correspondence, p. 82

3) Memoir and Correspondence, p. 75.

Apparently the work was to be undertaken jointly but the two ladies had different aims. Miss Ferrier is very definite on the purpose of a book, and a trait of character which she reveals when stating her object in writing, seems opposed to her boisterous irrepressible mirth.

"Part of your plot I like much, some not quite so well - for example it wants a moral" - "Yet, I think, where there is much tribulation, 'tis fitter it should be the consequence rather than the cause of misconduct and frailty" - "But as the only good purpose of a book is to inculcate morality and convey some lesson of instruction as well as delight, I do not see that what is called a good moral can be dispensed with in a work of fiction." ¹⁾

Since the days when the Scots schoolmaster Robert Henryson had undertaken to punish Cresseid in the "Testament", the Scot has from time to time revealed his love for a moral, his ideas on the just retribution of the wicked. Moreover, as has been mentioned in the previous chapter, the Evangelicalism of the age was hardening into a narrow and rigorous creed. As Susan Ferrier grew older she became more caustic. "Her satire which began with intellectual contempt for fools and a keen sense of superficial absurdities grew more and more into a denunciation of whatever was not ascetic." ²⁾ But to begin with, anyway, she laughed heartily at the fools.

Apart from this natural corrective bent, Susan Ferrier had behind her a century of literature with a distinctive moral tone - "to inculcate morality and convey some lesson of instruction as /

1) Memoir and Correspondence, page 75.

2) MacMillan's Magazine, Vol. 79, p. 419.

as well as delight" had been the inspiring motives of periodic and fictional literature from Addison and Steel's "Spectator" essays to Richardson and Mackenzie's novels. Moreover, as has been seen Susan Ferrier had found a model in La Bruyère, author of the moralistic "Caractères". Fortified by all this reading, she turned to propound a moral with zest, and as long as the zest is there, the moralising is fairly palatable to the modern reader. Her redoubtable power in satirical drawing often makes the object of her diversion contemptible enough. Too often however her sentiments are banal, and nothing points so much to the change of taste and the alteration in standards of the past one hundred and twenty years, as the tone of those homilies unhappily dispersed through her novels. The moral value of certain works of fiction however, seemed to puzzle even contemporaries. Jeffrey in the Edinburgh Review (1809) maintains that of all Maria Edgeworth's qualities as a novelist he envies her most "for the delightful consciousness of having done more good than any other writer, male or female of her generation", while of the same lady, Hall, the great preacher maintains:- "In point of tendency I should class her books among the most irreligious I ever read - She does not attack religion nor inveigh against it, but makes it appear unnecessary by exhibiting perfect virtue without it ---- No works ever produced so bad an effect on my own mind as hers."

These two examples serve to illustrate how sensitive the reading public was to the moral strain.

At the outset then Susan Ferrier was searching for a situation sufficiently piquant and productive of a moral, round which to build her novel, and in a letter to her literary confidant Miss /

Miss Clavering, she disclosed one in certain excitement:-

"I do not recollect ever to have seen the sudden transition of a high-bred English beauty who thinks she can sacrifice all for love to an uncomfortable solitary Highland dwelling among tall red-haired sisters and grim-faced aunts."¹⁾

Then comes a proposition, with a reminder one feels, that a moral will be sufficient compensation for any indulgence that high-spirited young ladies may permit themselves in such a plot:-

"Suppose each of us try our hands on it; the moral to be deduced from that is to warn all young ladies against runaway matches, and the character and fate of the two sisters would be unexceptionable."²⁾

A significant condition is attached to the whole proposal:-

"One thing let me entreat of you; if we engage in this undertaking let it be kept a profound secret from every human being. If I was suspected of being accessory to such foul deeds my brothers and sisters would murder me and my father bury me alive."³⁾

This shrinking from publicity was no adopted pose, for her modesty made her also insist in later life, on the destruction of her correspondence with her sister, but no doubt there were other reasons. She was well aware that her human models might resent their inclusion among her satiric portraits. Moreover, despite the fact that women could hold their own in that robust society /

1) Memoir and Correspondence. p. 76

2) Memoir and Correspondence, p. 76

3) Memoir and Correspondence, p. 77.

society there was a curious suggestion of indelicacy attached to novel-writing as a metier for women. A race of brilliant Scotswomen, including Lady Louisa Stuart, Lady Ann Lindsay and Lady Nairn, became timid and ashamed when confronted with the task of avowing their authorship. In trepidation lest she be revealed as the author of "Ugly Meg," Lady Louisa Stuart wrote to Sir Walter Scott - "I don't know whether the man in the old story was right when he called it a woman's highest praise not to be talked of one way or the other, but I'm sure it is her greatest blessing and only way of living in comfort."¹⁾

Of course, publishing scandals like the Chaldean indiscretions of Lockhart and Wilson in their younger days made the career of a writer a boisterous one. The odium attached to a "blue-stocking" reputation was an added discouragement, and a warning about this came from a strange source. 'Monk' Lewis, one of the eminent guests of the Campbells, wrote as follows:-

"I hear it rumoured that Miss Ferrier doth write novels, or is about making one. I wish she would let such idle nonsense alone, for, however great a respect I am entertained for her talents (which I do) I tremble lest she should fail in this book-making, and as a rule I have an aversion, a pity, and contempt for all female scribblers. The needle, not the pen, is the instrument they should handle, and the only one they ever use dexterously. I must except however, their true love-letters,²⁾ which are sometimes full of pleasing conceit."

'Monk' Lewis had no chance to air his aversion, pity or /

1) Scott's Letters. Vol. 1 p.109

2) Memoir and Correspondence of Susan Ferrier, ed. by Doyle, p.316.

or contempt, or make a new assessment of Susan Ferrier's talents, for he died in 1818, the year in which her first novel, "Marriage" was published, but it was not until 1851, that the authoress submitted to have her name prefixed to Bentley's edition of her works.

Although Miss Ferrier, in the process of constructing her first novel "Marriage", asks Miss Clavering - "When will you be ready to join hands with me?" her critical ability made her realise that her interests and those of her friend lay in very different directions. - "You say there are just two styles for which you have any taste, viz. the horrible and the astounding! Now I'll groan for you till the very blood shall curdle in my veins, or I'll shriek and stare till my own eyes start out of their sockets with surprise - but as to writing with you, in truth, it would be easy to compound a new element out of fire and water as that we two should jointly write a book."¹⁾

The criticism was as just as it was honest. In a letter dated February 1810, she rejects in her downright way, a proposal from Miss Clavering that they should exchange a weekly letter on the subject of their novel. Apart from interruptions, caused by the round of social duties, she feels -²⁾ "there's sometimes for a week together that I can't bear the sight of a pen and could no more invent a letter than I could have discovered the longitude. So for the present, let us put /

1) Memoir and Correspondence p. 85.

2) Memoir and Correspondence p. 87.

put our child to sleep and hope for better times to make him. Only once for all let me promise to you that I will not enter into any of your raw head and bloody bone schemes. I would not even read a book that had a spectre in it, and as for committing a most mysterious foul murder, I declare I'd rather take a dose of asafoetida."

Extravagantly as this is stated, there can be no doubt about Miss Ferrier's genuine conviction. She perceived the literary incompatibility of two temperaments. Henceforth, apart from one contribution (the history of Mrs. Douglas, the¹⁾ interpolation in Chapter XIII of Marriage) and some salutary advice and criticism on the first drafting of the novel, Miss Ferrier worked on "Marriage" alone.

Her subsequent manner of working on the novel can be deduced from her letters. Whenever she was evolving a personality that promised sport, Miss Claverling must have a foretaste of it. "I've a mind to enclose you a wee morsel of Lady Maclaughlan, though I think the dinner scene is carried too far, but I write down everything that folly suggests and²⁾ leave it to reason to abridge it afterwards."

The obvious pleasure she derived in creating this singular character was infectious. Miss Claverling replied:-

"First of all, I must tell you that I approve in the most signal manner of 'Lady Maclaughlan'. The sort of character /

1) Marriage (Bentley Edition) 1892.

2) Memoirs and Correspondence, p. 94.

character was totally unexpected by me and I was really quite transported with her."

There was too the lively pleasure of unmasking the victim. "Do I know the person who is the original? The dress was vastly like Mrs Damer and the manners like Lady Frederick,¹⁾ tell me if you did not mean a touch at her."

This exchange of literary confidence had all the stimulation of intrigue and afforded the two ladies great entertainment, but it had its disadvantages. Constantly the story in "Marriage" is caught and held up by disproportionate interest in one or other creature of humours. Though these creations are brilliantly handled, the focus of the reader's attention is frequently shifted from the adventures of the main characters to fascinating side issues. Miss Ferrier herself probably sensed this, as her admission quoted above suggests:- "though I think the dinner scene is carried too far."

The fault however really lies in the pallid treatment of the chief characters, and in the conventional sentiments they are made to utter. Worse than that, the main figures in the plot of Marriage are themselves displaced by another group in the second part of the novel and disorder is complete.

In the opening scenes "Marriage" promises well; an excellent novel could have been built round the situation - the reactions of a "high-bred English beauty sacrificing all for love to an uncomfortable Highland dwelling among tall red-haired sisters and grim-faced aunts." Here was a setting with which Miss Ferrier was familiar through sojourns in Argyllshire with her /

1) Memoir and Correspondence. p. 103.

her ducal friends; she knew the full flavoured idiom of the natives, and there was a spicy humour in contrasting "kail worms" with "butterflees".

Yet, though she protested to Miss Clavering - "You who are learned and witty and wise and know all bout the world, may pick and choose your country, and be as much at home in one as in another, but for a poor unlettered, illiterate, unskilled wight like me, what a figure should I make in foreign parts - "¹⁾ Miss Ferrier did jaunt, at least as far as England with her main characters in the second half of "Marriage", and with the departure from Scotland, some richness and some realism go from the novel. On this point, Miss Clavering gave some warning:-

"I don't like those high life conversations; they are a sort of thing by consent handed down from generation to generation in novels, but have little or no ground work in truth; and the first part of the book will please because the scenes are original in a book and taken from nature. These you now wish to add could at best amuse by putting one in mind of other novels, not by recalling to anybody what they ever²⁾ saw or heard in real life."

This letter was written on May 10th 1813, and that Miss Ferrier to some extent took her friend's advice is obvious, because the plot, even as it now stands, is greatly modified from the stiff beau-monde study of the first draft which Miss Clavering criticized.

The /

1) Memoir and Correspondence, ed. Doyle, p. 85.

2) Memoir and Correspondence, p.115.

The first heroine of "Marriage" is the Lady Juliana, daughter of the old Earl of Courtland. Apart from her great beauty, which Miss Ferrier in many little touches suggests is of the exquisite, delicate and fair variety, she is merely a satiric study in Affectation. The novelist never intends her to be considered as a personality, capable of development, but merely as an aura of petulance, nonchalance and fatigue. As such, she is consistently portrayed.

This fine lady, with her bad-tempered lap-dogs, (the perennial accompaniment of a fine lady since the days of Chaucer's Nonne Priestessee,) in the opening sentences of Marriage, is summoned to her father's study, there to be questioned about her hopes for establishment in the world. To the romantic young Juliana's notion of "a mere competence" with the man of her heart, the noble father responds in a fury with a definition of matrimony - "for the aggrandisement of her family, extending of their political influence - for becoming in short the depository of their mutual interest."

All these foregoing advantages are united in the person of the Duke of Linton despite his age, red hair and squint and so the lovely Juliana consoles herself with visions of "a ducal coronet, the most splendid jewels, the finest equipages and the largest jointure of any woman in England".

1)
Despite however the Duke's "exquisite taste in trinkets",
"the smiling eyes, curling hair and finely formed person of a
2)
certain captivating Scotsman" win the day, and the seventeen-year
old /

1) Marriage Vol. 1. Bentley Ed. p. 57

2) Marriage Vol 1. p. 57.

old Lady Juliana elopes with the gallant young soldier, Henry Douglas, to Scotland.

"Will ye gang to the Hielans', Leezie Lyndsay,
My bride and my darling to be."

So far, it was the Lord Ronald McDonald theme, but in place of the "ever and ever" of the ballads, Miss Ferrier gives the lovers two months of bliss and illusion, then, in pursuance of her warning to all young persons who indulge in runaway matches, she unfolds the consequence of this hasty union. "The enamoured husband began to suspect that the lips of his 'angel Juliana' could utter very silly things," while the fond bride on her part discovered that though her "adored Henry's figure was symmetry itself, yet it certainly was deficient in a certain air¹⁾ - a je ne sçais quoi - that marks the man of fashion".

The lady appealed to her father in vain; her husband found himself superseded in the Gazette, being absent without leave. As his benefactor, General Cameron, a rich relative of his mother, had instantly disinherited him because of his imprudent marriage, what was there left to do but to seek refuge with Henry's father, the old Laird, at Glenfern Castle in the Highlands.

Fortified by dreams of a Watteau rusticity complete with fêtes champêtres, Lady Juliana, accompanied by English Abigail, footman, two dogs, tame squirrel, mackaw and her husband, leaves Edinburgh for the Highlands.

Disillusionment comes soon - the tall thin gray house, small sullen lake, rugged hills and gray dykes, as seen on /

1) Marriage Vol 11. p. 59.

on a raw November day when their carriage halts on the summit of the road leading down into the glen, strike the pleasure-loving pair with chill foreboding.

The decayed retainer old Donald, the three long-chinned spinster aunts and five awkward purple sisters are introduced mercilessly one after the other, while Lady Juliana sinks down utterly despairing under their "oppressive kindness" and the muscular heartiness of the old Laird, newly summoned from his farming operations.

Days of vexation follow for Douglas at Glenfern, relieved by the presence of his elder brother and his sensible wife who strives to temper the blast for Juliana, shorn of all her luxuries and even of her comforts. A grotesque, but strangely compelling character, Lady MacLaughlan, the oracle of the aunts, suddenly appears, accompanied by a pathetic little oddity, Sir Samson, her husband.

Meanwhile Lady Juliana is still inconsolable, and the offer of the fine thriving farm of Clackandow from the old Laird, does not square with her ideas of a country estate. Mrs Douglas, her sister-in-law attempts to reconcile her to her lot by giving an account of her own life history, (Miss Clavering's contribution and one that she truly foresaw readers might skip) but it is of no avail.

In time Lady Juliana presents to the house of Douglas, twin daughters. Mrs Douglas adopts one of them, to the gratitude of its father and to the indifference of its mother. The young husband, goaded by the added responsibility appeals to his benefactor General Cameron who procures his reinstatement in /

in the army and settles £700 per annum on him provisionally, though the extravagant parade of Juliana, who with Henry joyfully returns to London, is regarded with disgust.

Shortly after the birth of a son, disastrously for Henry and Juliana, General Cameron himself weds, making it clear they need expect little from him in future. Juliana's father dies, and her name does not appear in his will. Scores of creditors now descend upon Henry; their possessions are seized, "and they found themselves on the point of being turned into the street, when Lady Juliana who had been for two days, as her woman expressed it, out of one fit into another, suddenly recovered strength to signify her desire of being conveyed to her brother's house."¹⁾

This same brother, Lord Lindore, whose wife has deserted him, nonchalantly invites his sister and her children to take up residence in the "noble mansion". The indolently generous brother, relieving Henry of all his embarrassments, including that of prison, procures his transfer to a regiment of the line, then under orders for India. Lady Juliana repudiates with horror the idea of accompanying her husband and Henry, after a violent scene, parts from his wife forever.

Henceforth, the careers of the two infant daughters are traced. Mary benefits from the good sense and gentleness of her adopted mother Mrs Douglas, while Adelaide, her sister, reared in all the magnificence of her uncle's home, is as beautiful, but /

1) "Marriage" Vol. 1. p. 251.

but even more disenchanting than Lady Juliana, for she is more intelligent. Hard cold and brilliant, she marries for ambition, the Duke of Altamont, though in reality loving her cousin, but has as little chance of happiness as her mother who married for love. She merely reverses the process, for she elopes with her lover and at length is despised, even by him.

Mary, repelled by her mother's and sister's lack of natural affection, is drawn towards her cousin, Lady Emily, Lord Lindore's daughter and derives great consolation from her vivacious company. In time, she too marries a Colonel Lennox, the son of an old blind lady on whom she has lavished loving attention, and the two, in their union, at last symbolise for the reader, the happy Marriage "which the poor, the sick and the desolate unite in blessing."

Such then, with all its organic faults, is the plot of Marriage. Miss Clavering was convinced that Susan Ferrier would be "the first author of the age". In the carriage coming from Ardencaple, she had read from the novel to Lady Charlotte Campbell, who amid gales of laughter, had pronounced it to be "without exception the cleverest thing of the kind that ever¹⁾ was written, far surpassing Fielding."

Though this was said in the first rapture of friendly enthusiasm, there was a modicum of justice in the compliment. Susan Ferrier certainly did not surpass Fielding, but she had some of the robust humour, if not the geniality of the Father of the English novel; she like him, savoured the comedy of la vie humaine /

1) Memoir and Correspondence, p. 106.

humane and like him, she was not afraid to tackle formidable creations, amplifying to the last detail all that was ludicrous or vulgar, though her art, often verging on the grotesque, is perhaps nearer in spirit to that of her countryman, Tobias Smollett; and their satiric attack against grossness of any kind probably arises from the same source - fastidiousness.

Yet Field in his picaresque novel never used so slender a link to connect episodes as did Susan Ferrier in *Marriage*, in the person of Lady Juliana. As a contemporary critic put it:- "The charm of *Marriage* consisted in the delineation of certain humorous characters. The story of that novel was the merest piece of flimsiness."¹⁾ Susan Ferrier's medium might more properly have been the drama (her novel *Inheritance* was poorly dramatised by one Fitzball) for her talent lay in the strong and effective drawing of the comic in character and in situation, and she was perfectly willing to accept any convention of plot. Some characters in *Marriage*, like Lady Maclaughlan and Dr. Redgill, parasitic physician to Lord Lindores, have a rich existence that lies outside the story; they very rarely impinge on it at all.

Apart from the lack of cohesion between character and plot, there was another discrepancy in Miss Ferrier's personal attitude. There is no kinship between her lively, at times uproarious comedy, and her very conventional sentiment. She is not equable like Miss Jane Austen, nor can she harmonise all the elements in her novel. The result of this is that her work is rough compared with the fine dovetailing methods of the Englishwoman. There also can be perceived in the preliminary correspondence, /

1) Blackwood's Magazine. June 1824, Vol. XV.

correspondence, a very definite anti-romantic attitude towards Marriage which gave edge to the satiric and made her avoid depicting emotional love scenes. Here, she resembles Miss Austen, who had ¹⁾ "all sorts of devices for evading scenes of passion". Miss Ferrier's escape was into conventional sentiment and homily which is more crude in Marriage than in her other two novels. Therefore Lady Juliana ²⁾ "thought not of the want of principle, she blushed not at the want of delicacy, that had led her to deceive a parent and elope with a man to whose character she was a total stranger. She therefore considered herself as having fallen a victim to love."

.Unfortunately, the protagonists of happy Marriage - Mary and Colonel Lennox, never catch the imagination of the reader; they are exemplary to the point of boredom. The portrayal of romantic love perhaps lies outside the scope of the social novel or novels of manners, but the flatness, the falling off from the verve of the comic interpolations in Marriage is depressing for the reader.

Contemporary critics noticed this flaw, but evolved a reason for it, flattering to the taste of the time. The novelist was a woman after all ³⁾ "and if they do feel as deeply as we do, there is some ineradicable principle of reserve about their nature, which prevents them from confessing that they do feel so - aye, from even hinting the possibility that they ever should feel so, afar off and dimly through the glass of fiction.- the minute tact /

1) V. Woolfe. Jane Austen. The Common Reader, p. 142

2) Marriage. Vol 1. p. 296.

3) Blackwood June 1824, V. 15.

tact of society is their especial province."

Be that as it may, Susan Ferrier's work was part of that movement begun by Fanny Burney and represented by Jane Austen "a movement towards developing the interest, the humour and the character in plain everyday life."¹⁾ By doing this she was setting herself a severe test, for her ordinary reader could judge of the truth of her portraits. This ability to draw from the life was not without its dangers; with Fanny Burney and many others after her, "manners - painting" had usurped actual character creation. Moreover, "the tiresome, the vulgar, the selfish and disagreeable are found in fact to be more susceptible of delineation by distinctive traits which insure recognition than the possessors of good feeling and good sense upon whose feelings and movements after all, the interest of every well-instructed story must depend."²⁾

And in time the boring become bores even to the most patient reader, particularly, (as in the case of *Marriage*) if they are not absorbed by the story, but hold up its flow. So numerous, in fact, are the quaint characters and situations created in high animal spirits by Susan Ferrier in *Marriage*, that instead of these eccentrics impeding the plot, it seems as if the plot detracted from their presentation, and that they would appear to greater effect as a series in a Scottish portrait gallery. By continually emphasising their deviation from the normal, Susan Ferrier like Smollett before her, tended towards the grotesque in her humorous delineations.

The /

1) Academy Vol 56, p. 152.

2) The Scottish Review, Vol.34, p. 70.

The reader feels this exaggeration whenever he enters the air of Glenfern, for if the three Aunts are not in themselves grotesques, their congregation under the same roof with Lady Maclaughlan and her tiny husband does not seem probable.

A contemporary critic in Blackwood's Magazine Vol. 15 - June 1824, maintains that with Susan Ferrier, "there is such a fine charity woven into the very web of sarcasm", but her attitude seems to have been rather that of Miss Stirling Graham who, in later days 1859, writes to Mrs Gillies - "I have been asked if I had no remorse in ridiculing singularities of character or practising deceptions - certainly not".

However Miss Ferrier cannot claim as did Miss Graham :- "There was no personal ridicule or mimicry of any living creature but merely the personation or type of a bygone class, that had survived the fashion of its day." Susan Ferrier was mimicing living creatures as well as making fast impressions of a bygone day. The prototypes of the three Aunts in Marriage were the Misses Edmonstone, neighbours and friends of the Ferriers, Many traits such as ¹⁾ "their bustling good nature - tiresome at times," "so brimful of charity that every other sentiment or emotion was quite sunk" are there in Miss Jacky, Miss Grizzy and Miss Nicky. Nearly always Miss Ferrier writes of them with amusement and lurking irritation in her correspondence ²⁾ "she is gone to dine with the Edmonstones who give /

■ Author of "Mystifications". p. XIX.

1) Memoir and Correspondence, p. 44.

2) Memoir and Correspondence, p. 261.

give a fête previous to Mrs Halliday and Dalmeny setting out on a tour to visit some old friends who they think must be dropping off - indeed they seem rather provoked at people for being ill."

Reminiscent of the three Aunts' gratification at the expected birth of an heir to the house of Douglas is the following:- "They are in great delight at having it announced that Sir Archibald's lady is to add a twig to the family tree and is to come here for the purpose that it may be a Scotch plant." (1)"Only look at thae young lambs," says Miss Grizzy in Marriage pointing to the five great girls;"see what pickters of health they are! I'm sure I hope my dear niece, your children will be just the same - only boys, for we are sadly in want of boys. It's melancholy to think we have not a boy among us, and that a fine auntient race like ours should be dying away for want of male heirs."

Pride of race indeed was the predominating emotion of the aunts and Susan Ferrier was not activated by charity when she attacked it in its exaggerated form as "the rawness and self-sufficiency which are characteristic defects of such large numbers of our countrymen."²⁾

"She is a most superior woman", said Miss Jacky in describing their elder nephew's wife, Mrs. Douglas, "though she has rather too many of her English prejudices yet to be all we could wish; but I have no doubt when she has lived a little longer amongst us, she will just become one of ourselves."³⁾

The /

1) Marriage Vol. 1. P. 83

2) Sir George Douglas - Famous Scots Series - Susan Ferrier p.133.

3) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 73

The "charming" family party on the first evening at Glenfern, furnishes an opportunity for further self-complacency on the part of the Scots and caprice from Lady Juliana. Mrs Douglas, simple and dignified, represents the norm of womanhood. The party indulges in music - the English beauty sings a snatch of Italian; the Laird reckons "all foreign music - i.e. ¹⁾ everything that was not Scotch, an outrage upon his ears." There is no harp in the house for the petulant Juliana, but the Douglas sisters possess "a very sweet spinnet" which must therefore be "a far superior instrument", and one of the nieces, the unfortunate Bella, "blushing like a peony rose, with great heavy, trembling hands began to belabour the unfortunate instrument", while the aunts beat time and encouraged her to proceed with exclamations of admiration and ²⁾ applause."

But the evening is not over - the house of Douglas has its piper Coil with cheeks "ready blown". "Vain would be the attempt to describe Lady Juliana's horror and amazement ³⁾ at the hideous sounds that for the first time assailed her ear." Highland pride is insulted. "A bonny bargain, indeed, that canna stand the pipes", said the old gentleman, as he went puffing ⁴⁾ up and down the room. "She's no the wife for a Hielandman."

The comedy is good, but it is sharp. Everything national - pride of race, of dance and music, even of food ("these excellent family broth" - so formidable as to be referred to in a deferential plural) is made ridiculous.

On /			
1)	Marriage	Vol. 1.	p. 80
2)	"	"	p. 82
3)	"	"	p. 85
4)	"	"	p. 86.

On the next day, word goes round at breakfast of the coming of Lady MacLaughlan. The news occasions an amusing family quarrel. It seems that the elder of the sons, 'the Major', actually dislikes this "exemplary, virtuous woman", and at his unkind suggestion that she was hastening her spouse's decease "with her infernal" concoctions, in the ensuing uproar, Miss Nicky let fall the teapot scalding Psyche - the pug. Lady Juliana screamed and amid the hubbub- "Clap a cauld ¹⁾ potatoe to the brute's tae" cried the old Laird gruffly. It is farce, but excellent of its kind and imbued with some of the startling vigour of a Gilray cartoon.

After the meal, Lady Juliana in lace cap, lilac satin pelisse and silk shoes is taken for a walk by the sisters well "happed" in shrunken duffle greatcoats, vast poke-bonnets, ²⁾ red-worsted neckcloths and pattens". This walk gives Miss Ferrier the opportunity of commenting on the countryside. She notices with a reproving eye, like Mrs. Hamilton, her compatriot authoress of the novel - "The Cottagers of Glenburnie" "that there's a very bad step just at the door almost, which Glenfern ³⁾ has been always speaking about getting mended". She had already commented on the "composition and dimensions of that ornament to a gentleman's farmyard and a cottager's front door ycleped in the language of the country - a midden". Now the rutted road, bleak wind, troubled lake disgusted and fretted to the very soul the weary Lady Juliana, who had no taste for "Ossianic scenery".

Unlike Sir Walter Scott, Miss Ferrier never expatiates on scenery or setting but her touches are deft and the atmosphere always /

always secured. Such is her description of the smoke-filled drawing-room of Glenfern Castle "where the high-backed chairs adhered most pertinaciously to the gray walls, on which hung, in narrow black frames, some of the venerable ancestors of the Douglas family."¹⁾

Immediately before the actual entry of Lady MacLaughlan,²⁾ Miss Ferrier in "sententious homily" of which alas there are too many in Marriage, discourses on the excellency of Mrs Douglas, who represents the benevolent principle, the Christian spirit and enforces her belief that the weaknesses of our neighbours are more difficult to bear than the vices. The foibles of the aunts all originated in what was now incurable viz. the natural weakness of their minds with their ignorance of the world and "the illiberality and prejudices of a vulgar education."³⁾

The commonplace utterance of the opening, warms up somewhat, when the novelist sketches the three sisters. There was firstly Miss Jacky, who was all over sense, who even drew on her gloves with an air of sense, "as if the one arm had been Seneca, the other Socrates" From which may have been inferred, that from continually ordering everyone and from being liberal of advice to the poor, Miss Jacky "with common truths and a grave dictatorial manner", concealed her lack of that good quality with which the neighbourhood in superstition had accorded her".⁴⁾ Of the three sisters, it is noticeable that /

1) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 67

2) Sir G. Douglas. Famous Scots Series. Miss Ferrier, p. 127

3) Marriage. Vol. 1. p. 102.

4) Marriage, Vol. 1. p. 104.

that Miss Jacky does not relapse into the Doric, and, probably due to her recurring sermons of advice, has the stilted utterance of the Scot speaking on "dress" occasions, e.g.

"Brother, I appeal to you to protect the character of this most amiable, respectable matron from the insults and calumny¹⁾ your son thinks proper to load it with," etc.

"Miss Grizzy was merely distinguishable from nothing by her simple good nature, the inextricable entanglement of her thoughts - her love of letter writing and her friendship with Lady Maclaughlan."²⁾

The third, Miss Nicky is nicely "hit-off". "Miss Nicky had about as much sense as Miss Jacky, but as no kingdom can maintain two Kings, so no family can admit of two sensible women and Nicky was therefore obliged to confine hers to the narrowest possible channels of housekeeping, mantua-making, etc. and to sit down for life (or at least till Miss Jacky should be married) with the dubious character of not wanting for sense either."³⁾ Relenting however, Miss Ferrier concludes that the three were "well-meaning, kind-hearted, revered⁴⁾ their brother, doated upon their nephews and nieces".

The advent of Lady Maclaughlan is excellently drawn; there is the anticipation of the sisters, especially of Miss Grizzy; the appearance of a pea-green chariot from which issues a figure in a tight-coloured large-flowered chintz, "carefully⁵⁾ drawn through the pocket-holes". A lackey draws forth from the /

1) Marriage p. 94. Vol. 1.
 2) Marriage p. 94, Vol. 1.
 3) Marriage p. 105.
 4) Marriage p. 105.
 5) Marriage p. 107.

the coach" a small bundle enveloped in a military cloak the contents of which would have baffled conjecture, but for "the large cocked hat and little booted leg which protruded at opposite extremities"¹⁾. A loud, but slow and well-modulated voice resounds through the stone-passage - Lady MacLaughlan has arrived.

Her introduction to Lady Juliana (approved of by Miss Clavering) is a masterly scene. Hogarth would have delighted in it. Holding her at arms length, Lady MacLaughlan scans the beauty with elevated brows and broad fixed, stare; then after an interruption due to Sir Sampson's stupendous cough, "resting her chin upon the head of her stick she resumed her scrutiny of Lady Juliana". And it is from her lips that we get the only detailed description of the beauty:-

"You really are a pretty creature! You've got a very handsome nose, your mouth's very well, but I don't like your eyes; they're too large and too light; they're saucer eyes. Why ha'n't you black eyes? You're not a bit like your father - I know him very well. Your mother was an heiress; your father married her for her money, and she married him to be a Countess; so that's the history of their marriage - humph!"²⁾

And thus the terrifying lady fires her shots! She does not spare her husband's vanity either; he would rise from the easy chair in which he was enveloped to do the honours of the occasion:- "Why, you know my dear, your legs may be very good legs, but they can't walk."³⁾

Best /

1) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 108

2) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 110.

3) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 112.

Best of all probably is the long-looked-forward-to visit of the Aunts, proudly accompanying their beautiful new niece to Lochmarlie Castle. Miss Becky goes with them; her toilet is described with malicious perfection - "her arms being strapped back till her elbows met by means of a pink ribbon of no ordinary strength or doubtful hue."¹⁾ Some blunder has been made about the day appointed, with the result that the party from Glenfern arrive at Lochmarlie to find no lights nor welcome. Sir Samson is surprised in an indecorous situation - in his night cap.²⁾ Lady Maclaughlan is in the "teach tap" as her Highland servitor explains, in a gloomy chamber presiding over the contents of a steaming kettle. With cats darting about and shadows flickering on the walls, Lady Maclaughlan assumes the stature and "marble aspect" of a priestess undertaking mystic rites. But her blunt amazement at the appearance of the aunts, and brusque dismissal of their expostulations soon restore the impression of the life and blood Lady Maclaughlan. The anger of Miss Jacky and the discomfiture of Miss Grizzy are complete when the Lady emphatically asserts:-

"Even if it had been written Tuesday, you might have had the sense to know it meant Thursday".³⁾ However, leaving "the resuscitating tincture all in the dead - thraw Methusalem pills quite in their infancy"⁴⁾ the party are led off to piece together their shattered evening in the parlour.

Lady Maclaughlan has in her some of the mastery of Lady Hester

1) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 185

2) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 188

3) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 191.

4) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 192.

Hester Stanhope, that amazing Amazon of the period but, (and this is the interesting part) the reader feels that her mastery has been asserted, partly because it was in her nature, and partly because of the pitiful inadequacy of the little Sir Sampson, the ex-soldier and gallant, whose greatest combat so far had undoubtedly been with his cough which ever threatened to extinguish him. There is then a lurking pathos about Lady MacLaughlan whose startling eccentricity covers a good heart and much common sense. The pathos however is not allowed to interfere with the extremely amusing dialogue and abrupt mannerisms; it is only suggested towards the end, during Sir Sampson's last illness and after his death, and is evolved rather from the situation than from the character. Those two old women, Lady MacLaughlan and Aunt Grizzy, one as strong-willed as the other is weakly good-natured, watch over the senile grotesque, the pitiful little Sir Sampson to the last. Lady MacLaughlan never flinches from facts; Aunt Grizzy, in her devotion to the house of MacLaughlan, is not aware of anything pathetic or ludicrous, as her nature is itself composed of these two elements.

That Miss Ferrier had potentialities for portraying pathos, that there are some touches of tenderness about her work, is undoubted, but owing to her satiric attitude and to her own rather shy personality, these touches are rare. From her correspondence it can be seen that she found it difficult to be intimate, even with her closest friends, and covered her feelings in extravagant ebullitions of wit; from the public too, she shielded herself, behind anonymity and the satiric mask.

1)
 "A feminine Swift", (the Swift of Cadenus and the Journal)
 is no inaccurate description of this Scottish novelist. As a
 softer tone was introduced in her later comments on Miss
 Edmonstone "a blessed disposition, as seen in our good old friend
 Miss Edmonstone, whose heart is still so overflowing with
 benevolence and practical kindness", so one finds in Marriage,
 2)
 the touching picture of the deaf, paralytic and childish mannikin
 Sir Sampson and Aunt Grizzy reciprocally happy in each other's
 company.

But there is a grander note about Lady Maclaughlan -
 this female Boanerges is clear-sighted and courageous.
 Encouraging Mary in her marriage with Colonel Lennox, she
 dismisses the antagonism of Sir Sampson to the House of Lennox
 with these words:-

"Everybody laughs at the hatred of a little old man
 in a cocked hat. You may laugh too. So now, God bless you!" 3)

On the first appearance of the Maclaughlans, the reader
 may feel there is something deliberately cruel, harshly satiric
 in the creation of such a couple: the awesome height of Lady
 Maclaughlan, a turreted Cybele with her monstrous head-gear;
 the minuteness of her husband with his shrunken limbs: she,
 terrifyingly laconic: he, shrilly chattering, but by the end
 of Marriage, after having enjoyed the lady's sapience, her quelling
 of the weak, the foolish and the muddled, one senses a certain
 forbearance and charity, even affection for those who claim
 protection /

1) Academy Vo. 56, p. 152
 2) Memoir and Correspondence. p. 263
 3) Marriage Vol. 11. p. 317

protection from her strength.

In Marriage, Lady MacLaughlan is probably the best satiric portrait in the gallery, but there is a small sketch of an old spartan Scotswoman, which touches on a live nerve of the past, and which for sheer realism, is probably unsurpassed in Susan Ferrier's works.

Mary, brought up by Major and Mrs Douglas, is being escorted by her uncle to Edinburgh. While there, they visit a Mrs Violet MacShake. Her "airy dwelling place" is on the Castle Hill and the apartment in which they find this healthy old woman "with the drooping snuffy nose, long turned up chin, small quick gray eyes and sarcastic expression"¹⁾ and the apartment in which they found this healthy old witch of ninety-six is chill and formidable as its owner, with lank haircloth chairs. Although the season was advanced and the air piercing cold, the grate stood smiling in all the charms of polished steel"¹⁾. Yet whenever the reader enters the cold of the house, he feels the invigorating quality of the atmosphere, and hears the living accents of a bygone day, for Mrs Violet MacShake speaks in vivid Scots and her tongue is biting; she enjoys seeing her victims squirm.

The theme of this study is the change that has come in the manners, and in the outward appearance, of Edinburgh.²⁾ In Mrs Violet MacShake's life-time, "the great glourin' new toun" has sprung up on the other side of the Nor' Loch. Young Mary suggests that there may have been improvements, but the old lady /

1) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 333.

2) Marriage Vol. I. p.336

lady rounds on her sharply:-

"A bony impruvement or ens no, to see tyleyors and
sclaters leavin whar I mind jewks and yerls."¹⁾

An older generation ever finds itself healthier, hardier and finer in its youth than the rising generation, but surely there was never as 'robustious'a society, save perhaps in Elizabethan England, which so relished living as that of the redoubtable monagenarian, Mrs Violet MacShake, for "fowk are naither born, nor kirsened, nor do they wad or dee as they used to du - awthing's changed." "The idle cheels and dinket-oot madams prancin'" rouse her sarcasm and contempt. Gone were the days of "owthority" for the head of the house when "wife an' servants, reteeners an' childer, aw trummelt i' the presence o' their heed;"²⁾ gone indeed were the days of "mainers".

Various uncomplimentary references to Mr Douglas and his family, that gentleman swallowed, but sneers at his presents of game - "poor fisinless dirt - no worth the chowing" - roused the Highland landlord's wrath. However he is disarmed by her anecdotes of his boyhood:- "Div ye mind hoo ye was affronted, because I set ye doon to a cauld pigeon pie, an' a tanker o' tippeny, ae night to ye're fowerhoors, afore some leddies - he, he, he!"³⁾ In this there was an echo of a tale about Mr Ferrier and his grandfather, who had tantalized him with a glimpse of a pigeon pie for his lunch, after a walk of sixteen /

1) Marriage Vol.1. p. 336

2) Marriage Vol. 1., pp.336-7

3) Marriage Vol. 1., p.342.

sixteen miles from Edinburgh to Linlithgow, only to remove it from his reach.

Mrs Violet MacShake belongs to that "singular race of excellent Scotch old ladies" whom Lord Cockburn described once and for all time in his "Memorials" - "Very resolute and indifferent about the modes and habits of the modern world, but hiding under their curious outsides, sense, human affection and spirits."

Mrs MacShake's portrait is sharpened, but the kindness is there, and, though poking fun at a "feckless windlestrae" like Mary, she presents her with a pair of splendid diamond earrings.

The whole episode is so realistic, that in the gallery series that composes the best in Marriage, this canvas comes startlingly to life, and the figure of old Mrs Violet MacShake walks energetically out of its frame.

A small companion sketch to the Mrs MacShake incident is Mary's encounter with the Edinburgh Bailie Broadfoot on Calton Hill.¹⁾ There is a touch of John Galt's worthy Bailies in this good man, who regards three "rounds o' the hill" indispensable after "public interteenments", and who derives more satisfaction from the smoke of the Leith glass-houses, in which concern he had a share, than from all the rural beauty spread below the hill. That curious blend also found in Galt's magistrates, of public benefaction with private interest is illustrated in the catering establishment in Lord Nelson's Monument "let aff" to a pastrycook. Pies, custards and berries were allowed, but of course the "order in the cooncil" decreed "there /

"there should be naething of a spirituous nature introduced."¹⁾
 The reader can imagine the smile that curled Miss Ferrier's lips as she wrote these words; again, there is a keen sense of contact with a real past.

Two other scenes may be selected from Marriage as examples of Susan Ferrier's satiric methods. Neither give the impression of first-hand contact that the Mrs Violet MacShake and the Bailie episodes bear. On Mary's same journey south with her uncle, she is given a taste of Lowland hospitality, Stranded in a little market town on a fair day with no hope of lodging and with no welcoming Highland homes, Mr. Archibald Douglas and his niece are accosted by one Bob Guffaw - an old schoolfellow of the Major's, and are borne off to Howffend - "a mean vulgar-looking mansion with dirty windows, ruinous thatched offices, and broken fences". The live stock of various species are crowded together in a neighbouring yard separated from the house by a low dyke. A lively touch is a group of bare-legged boys "takin' a heize on the yett". The interior corresponds - "fragments of cloth, dirty novels, ashes on the grate",²⁾ and the mistress, Mrs Guffaw, a pretentious slattern. The couple are another example of an ill-assorted pair - "joined not matched", she, the daughter of a trader who had died insolvent; he, a reduced lieutenant.

Susan Ferrier gazes on the scene of neglect and disorder with amusement and also with some of the reproof of Mrs /

1) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 351.

2) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 316.

Mrs Hamilton. She had read "The Cottagers of Glenburnie" by 1808. and had been delighted with the McClartys "the most exquisite family group imaginable"¹⁾. An added offence to attack was the vulgarity of the Guffaws - the boisterous laughter and rude good nature of the man, coupled with perpetual references to her opulent past from his helpmate. As the Douglasses move off in their carriage early next morning, Mr Guffaw "as he went whistling over his gate, ruminated sweet and bitter thoughts as to the destinies of the day - whether he should solace himself with a good dinner and the company of Bailie Merrythought at the Cross Keys in G - or put up with cold mutton and May at home"²⁾.

Good though the scene is it lacks all those fearsome particularities of the MacShake encounter: the Guffaws are types, and as Miss Ferrier makes her Lady Emily say - "I prefer an indifferent original any day to a good copy".

Even more frigid is the set piece in Book 11, when Mary and her Aunt Grizzy visit the salon of blue-stockings at Mrs Bluemits. Apart from this, Aunt Grizzy's foolish credulity in the South had enabled Miss Ferrier to portray the simple creature as the dupe in a series of little cartoons depicting various humours - at dinner with Mrs Pullens who is consumed with self-complacency for her domestic management; as the victim of the odious Mrs Fox (probably the well-known Edinburgh character Mary, Lady Clerk in real life) that amateur in charity and collector of curiosities. But the "Bluemits" incident is the most elaborate. This is a formal piece of satire, but there is /

1) Memoirs and Correspondence, p. 55

2) Marriage, Vol. 1. p. 325.

is good entertainment in it, when "amiable authors" and "sensitive poets" are bandied about from lip to lip, and Johnson, Cowper, Campbell, Byron and Scott are weighed and measured. The purists and anti-purists have an etymological spar. Most amusing perhaps is the leave-taking:-

"Fly not yet 'tis just the hour" said Mrs Bluemits, to the first of her departing guests as the clock struck ten.

"It is gone with its thorns and its roses" replied her friend with a sigh, and a farewell pressure of the hand".

"I vanish", said Mrs Apsley, snatching up her tippet, reticule, etc. "and like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave¹⁾ not a wrack behind."

Miss Grizzy, quite affronted at her niece's silence during this fanfare of wit, though she had the "Hermit and Watt's Hymns by heart "had half a mind to return in order to chant "Farewell to Lochaber". This parting scene is reminiscent of Cockburn's description in his "Memorials" of the exchange of "sentiments", at old Edinburgh dinner-parties, a painful custom, whereby each guest in turn had to produce an apt quotation.

Miss Ferrier herself is cleared from the charge of "blue-stocking" by no less a person than her admiring friend, Sir Walter Scott.

"A gifted personage having besides her great talents, conversation the least exigeante of any author - female, at least, whom I have ever seen among the long list I have encountered /

1) Marriage Vol. 11, p. 263.

This irritation is reminiscent of Maria Edgeworth's King Corny who has a similar outburst against Ormond:-

"Harry Ormond don't set about to cure yourself of your natural passions - why this is rank methodism."

"No methodist shall ever darken my doors, or lighten them either, with their new lights. New lights! bad! and nonsense! - for man, woman, or beast."¹⁾

There was a feeling in the air for Evelinas, Emilys and Elizabeths:-

"No faultless Monster that the world ne'er saw"²⁾
but the offspring of Nature. Yet Susan Ferrier did not think these young women quite proper as heroines, who should be exalted a little over the common herd; witness what she says of Jane Austen's Emma:-

"I have been reading 'Emma' which is excellent; there is no story whatever and the heroine is no better than other people; but the characters are all so true to life and the style so piquant that it does not require the adventitious aids of mystery and adventure."³⁾

Of course the intelligent young woman quick with her tongue, was a heroine type that was starting and did not find universal favour at first.

"I should like amazingly to see that same "Pride and Prejudice" which everybody dings my ears with. Hannah likes it excessively, only she says the heroine's a little vulgar."⁴⁾

One /

1) Ormond, p. 68 by Maria Edgeworth.

2) Preface to Evelina p.xvi. Everyman Edition.

3) Memoir and Correspondence, p.128. Letter to Miss Clavering 1816.

4) Memoir and Correspondence, May 10th 1813, p. 117.

One would expect the daughter of the "Man of Feeling" to have some qualms about Elizabeth Bennet.

Yet one feels that Miss Ferrier must have derived great amusement from Lady Emily. She is so ready at repartee, so quick to see the ludicrous that she seems to be a projection of Miss Ferrier herself in her younger days. She is ruthless too in her witticisms, unsparing in her verbal lashes. There is the same heightened tone in her outbursts as in Miss Ferrier's earlier letters, only Emily, like her aunt Lady Juliana, has one slight affectation which Miss Ferrier spared her correspondents. Despite Miss Clavering's warning against "Frenchifying", there is a peppering of ill-spelt French to season the fashionable tongue.

For the reader, Lady Emily is something like that other Emilia in the tragic setting of Othello - she speaks out naturally and wrathfully, giving voice to the public's feelings; though in this instance, it is in but a little world of petty foibles, and peccadillos. As her creator says - "Her indignation against the oppressor was always much stronger than her sympathy with the oppressed,"¹⁾ or as she herself puts it:-

"My kettledrums and trumpets I keep for Lady Juliana²⁾ and I am quite in the humour for giving her a flourish today."

Kind sympathy for Mary, callously treated by her mother, is mixed with exasperation at Mary's meek submission to trials. For Mary's benefit, Lady Emily is quick to sum up the shortcomings of all strangers. the inexperienced girl meets, as for instance, the lightning sketches of Ladies Matilda and Placid, Mrs Downe Wright /

1) Marriage Vol. 11, p. 25.

2) Marriage Vol. 11, p.65.

Wright and Mrs Wiseacre, though these again, seem one other degree removed from first hand portraiture, than even the Bluemits farce. And indeed as Miss Clavering had straightforwardly told Miss Ferrier, - "These polished individuals, smoothed down by continual jostling and propinquity have not the characteristic traits that fit them to be drawn, and a true picture of fashionable society of London would be very dull.

There was one person attached to the household of Lord Lindore, who, if he was dull in himself, provided endless entertainment to others, and drew Lady Emily's most sparkling raillery. During her first few days at her Mother's home, Mary had noticed "a very tall corpulent man, with a projecting front, large purple nose and a profusion of chin, who seemed to be at the winding up of a solitary but voluminous meal"¹⁾. Lady Emily on being asked who he was, replied:-

"He is a sort of medical aid-de-camp of papa's, who for the sake of good living, has got himself completely domesticated here. He is vulgar, selfish and gourmand, as you must already have discovered; but these are accounted his greatest perfections, as papa, like all indolent people must be diverted - and that he never is by genteel, sensible people. He requires something more piquant, and nothing fatigues him so much as the conversation of a commonplace, sensible man - one who has the skill to keep his foibles out of sight. Now what delights him in Dr. Redgill, there is no reticence - any child who runs may read his character at a glance."²⁾

The gentleman, thus sharply drawn, was certainly distinguished /

1) Marriage Vol.11. p.14.

2) Marriage Vol. 11. p. 17.

distinguished by singleness of mind. Punctuality was his god - where meals were concerned, and when thwarted in this point by Lady Juliana he gave vent to his wrath by kicking her pug. Indescribable was the anger of mistress and dog.

Mary, ever on the look-out for good in others, found that Dr. Redgill had a high impression of the Highlands and on encouraging him further in this theme, was rewarded by the epicure's map of Scotland. Loch Fyne herring, Finnan haddo', Tay salmon, Athole whisky were all savoured on the tongue. Indeed, Dr. Redgill's respect for Mary, was measured by reverence for the victuals of her country, and as she finally drove away to Scotland for her marriage - "grouse always acceptable - roebuck stuffed with heather carries well at all times" ¹⁾ were his parting requests wafted on the wind.

Dr. Redgill merits an honourable place among the rank of Pantagruels, though he has little of that merry temperament associated with good-eating and drinking but concentrates on food with sombre relish. In Marriage, he is usually pursuing a tantalizingly elusive meal and is therefore repining in melancholy frustration; his medical duties are of the most perfunctory order. Through him, Susan Ferrier directs a comic attack on romantic love, the champion on the other side being Lady Emily. Over the "Manuel des Amphitryons" the contest is wages, the doctor contending that, cooks not cupids hold sway over men's hearts.

There is a characteristic of Miss Ferrier's not so far mentioned, which appears once in Marriage to reappear in her subsequent /

subsequent novels, and that is her relish for the gruesome. The scene is the christening of Mrs Archibald Douglas's son in great style at Glenfern.

According to the Aunts, strange dreams had ushered in the day. However all was going well, until - "The cake and wine was in its progress round the company, when, upon its being tendered to the old gentleman, who was sitting silent in his arm-chair, he abruptly exclaimed in a most discordant voice:-

"Hey! what's a' this wastery for?" - and ere an answer could be returned, his jaw dropped, his eyes fixed, and the Laird of Glenfern ceased to breathe." ¹⁾

So much is the Laird a caricature of his type, that the reader experiences a shock when his creator brings him close to the realities of life and death. The conjunction of his grandson's christening with his own death underlines a certain starkness, for behind the blunt humour and burlesque of the character, the reader senses Susan Ferrier's understanding of the passing age of agrarian landlord, when with primitive methods, generations of farmers had wrested sustenance from a bitter soil.

In this incident too Susan Ferrier underlines the popular superstitions of the Highlands, in the conversation of the Laird's contemporaries remaining "in the drawing-room in a sort of restless solemnity peculiar to collateral affliction where all seek to heighten the effect upon this and shift the lesson from themselves." ²⁾

An ancient gentlewoman with solemnity produced a Gaelic prophecy which she interpreted somewhat strangely, though the /

1) Marriage Vol. 1. p. 273.

2) Marriage Vol. 1. p.275-6.

the company admitted the application, all save (and this is a shrewd touch)a" sceptic who was only a low-country merchant elevated by purchase to the dignity of a Highland laird."¹⁾

However it was "a grand burial" - five-hundred persons, horse and foot, high and low, male and female, graced the obsequies of the Laird of Glenfern. The conditions of the rhyme were fulfilled:-

"Benenck was there in his new wig and the autumnal leaves dropped on the coffin as it was borne along the vale."²⁾

Though the entire episode is startling enough, it is not perhaps surprising that it should occur in Susan Ferrier's novels, since the grotesque is so near to the macabre; besides it is in the Scottish tradition from Dunbar to Stevenson and as such is not so out of place in a Scottish novel of manners.

Marriage, when it finally appeared in 1818 was well received. For the copyright, however, Blackwood, despite his flowery extolments, offered only £150. However, it seemed to be universally noted that, as Mrs Piozzi said:-

"The novel called Marriage is the newest and merriest."³⁾

But the sweetest praise for a writer of Scottish fiction was a word from the author of Waverley:-

" I retire from the field (of Scottish fiction) conscious that there remains behind not only a large harvest, but labourers capable of gathering it in. More than one writer has of late displayed talents of this description, and if the present writer, himself a phantom, may be permitted to distinguish a brother /

1) Marriage, Vol. 1. p. 278

2) Marriage Vol. 1., p.281.

3) Mrs. Piozzi to Sir James Fellowes. Dec.1, 1818. (Life and Writings) Vol.11,p. 456.

brother or perhaps a sister shadow, he could mention in particular¹⁾ the author of the very lively work entitled "Marriage".

Thus with all its imperfections on its head, the first novel was safely launched on the perilous sea of popular fancy. As Tickler said:- "plot poor, episodes disproportionate, characters too often caricatures, but thick-set with specimens of sagacity, happy traits of nature, flashes of genuine satire, such easy good-humour, sterling good sense and above - mature²⁾ and perfect knowledge of the world."

This judgment is true of the three novels, but especially justifiable in Marriage. Yet, ill-assembled and unequal as it was, Marriage promised well. Despite the staleness of the serious sentiments and the lack of a uniform method, (e.g. the mixing of realistic satire with artificial moralising) there was undoubtedly great entertainment in the novel, which is after all the *raison d'être* of any work of fiction.

Above all, here and there symbolized by the harsh chuckle of Mrs Violet MacShake, is heard the authentic voice of Scotland at a time when that country, in the flux from one age to another, was of a character difficult to assess.

— o o o —

- 1) Epilogue to "Tales of My Landlord" at close of "The Legend of Montrose" - Sir Walter Scott.
- 2) Noctes Ambrosianae - No. LVIII.

THE INHERITANCE

III.

In 1824, Miss Ferrier's second novel, "The Inheritance" was published. This book, unlike Marriage, which had been evolved piecemeal in an irregular, lively correspondence, had the advantage of six years of quiet composition and of careful revision. That its appearance excited a pleasurable surprise in the literary world of the time, is suggested by Blackwood.

"In a word, our notion was that a clever woman had sketched very cleverly the most prominent persons in the gallery of her own personal acquaintance, and that this being done and done so admirably, there was like to be an end of the matter". In short - "Marriage was a very clever book, but this is an admirable novel."¹⁾

There is no less vitality in "The Inheritance" than in "Marriage"; the characters are even more numerous and better grouped, but "what was shapeless and redundant in Marriage²⁾ is here moulded and shaped by the exigencies of the plot". However melodramatic the plot of "The Inheritance" may be, there is no doubt that it is well handled, and the discipline of sustaining a fairly plausible narrative was salutary. Violent and 'stagey' though it seems to the modern reader, and superannuated even in Susan Ferrier's own day, the story is in the direct tradition of the Richardsonian villains, and of heroes refined /

1) Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. XV. June, 1824.
 2) The Blackwood Group - Sir G. Douglas, p. 121.

refined out of all likeness to men, but in Susan Ferrier's manipulation of the theme, there is a variety of scenes and of characters, and a certain suspense is well maintained till the fairly probable denouement.

The Inheritance was that of the domain of Rossville, situated somewhere on the west coast of Scotland, and inveterate family pride was the chief attribute of the members of that house. This pride had been grievously afflicted when the Hon. Thomas St. Clair, youngest son of the Earl of Rossville, had married a beautiful but obscure Miss Sarah Black. The unhappy couple were granted a suitable allowance, provided that they banished themselves abroad, where their obscurity would not be such an affliction to their friends and relatives.

During this unwilling exile in France, three brothers perished, and Mr St. Clair and the present Earl, both childless, were the only survivors.

On announcing the expected birth of a child, the exiles were permitted to come a step nearer home to Paris, but before they reached the capital Mrs St. Clair gave birth to a daughter, who was henceforth heiress presumptive to Rossville. With an excellent nurse for their child, Mrs St. Clair and the Hon. Thomas returned to the south of France for reasons of health. There, in time, Thomas St. Clair became a paralytic and eventually died. The long-winded but kindly Earl invited the widow and her daughter Gertrude to repair instantly to Rossville Castle.

After their arrival at the splendid Scottish seat, they are soon introduced to the other members of the house. There is /

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is Lady Betty the Earl's sister, merely adumbrating the dullness and stupidity of her brother; the elder nephew, the politician Mr Delmour destined to be Gertrude's future affianced; his younger brother Colonel Delmour, a dashing, fine gentleman and a gamester; Gertrude's other cousin Edward Lyndsay "sober, steadfast and demure" marked out as the "unexceptionable" hero of the tale. That torment of relatives, of the second cousin variety, and one of the masterpieces of Susan Ferrier's creation - Miss Pratt is a constant dropper-in at Rossville. Like her namesake, Miss Pratt, in Maria Edgeworth's "The Absentees",¹⁾ she "hears everything that everybody says, and more than they say".

The person of Miss Pratt is thus described. "Her eyes were not by any means fine eyes - they were not reflecting eyes; they were not soft eyes; they were not sparkling eyes; they were not melting eyes; they were not penetrating eyes; neither were they restless eyes, nor rolling eyes, nor squinting eyes, nor prominent eyes - but they were active, brisk, busy, vigilant, immovable eyes, that looked as if they could not be surprised by anything - not even by sleep. They never looked angry, or joyous, or perturbed, or melancholy, or heavy; but morning, noon, and night they shone the same, and conveyed the same impression to the beholder, viz. that they were eyes, that had a look - not like Sterne's monk, beyond this world - but a look into all things on the face of this world. Her other features had nothing remarkable in them, but the ears might evidently be classed under the same head with the eyes; they were something resembling rabbits - long, prominent, restless, vibrating /

1) "The Absentees" p. 312. Maria Edgeworth, (London 1910.)

vibrating ears, for ever listening, and never shut by the powers of thought."¹⁾

Miss Ferrier was obviously enjoying herself. Here is a specimen of Miss Pratt's barb; she is commenting on the portraits of some of Lord Rossville's ancestors:-

"My dear Lord Rossville!" exclaimed Miss Pratt throwing herself back in her chair, "I hope you're not going to say Miss St Clair has the nose of Red Robby, as he was called - root, indeed! - a pretty compliment! If it ~~was~~ a root, it must have been a beetroot, As Anthony Whyte says, it's a nose like the handle of a pump-well; and as for Lady Janet's mouth, he says it's neither more nor less than a slit in a poor's-box."²⁾

The heroine Gertrude is very well-placed in this novel as a link between various parties: with her, the reader visits Mrs St Clair's relatives, who are in a more humble sphere of life - the delicate and gentle Misses Black, her sisters and the family of Mr Alexander Black. With that effusion of vulgarity and pretentiousness Miss Bell Black, the oldest daughter, and her fiancé the Nabob, Major Waddell, Miss Ferrier deals with consummate malice. There are also the little less vulgar Miss Lilly, and the meek Miss Anne. Best of all on Mrs St. Clair's side of the house, however, is her Uncle Adam, one of the great figures of Scottish portraiture, recalling that of Mrs Violet MacShake in Marriage.

"He /

1) The Inheritance - Vol. 1. p. 63.

2) The Inheritance, Vol. 1. p. 67.

"He was above the middle size, with high, stooping shoulders, sharp, cross-looking elbows, projecting far beyond his back, a somewhat stormy blue face, and little pale eyes, surmounted by shaggy white eyebrows. His ordinary headpiece, a striped woollen night-cap had been laid aside for a capacious powdered peruke with side curls, and a large queue. To complete the whole, he was left-handed, which gave a peculiar awkwardness to his naturally ungainly deportment."

The sparring of Uncle Adam with his pretentious niece, Miss Bell Black, is ruthless.

"Mr. Ramsay, with a bow and a sardonic smile, here presented her with the piece of southernwood he held in his hand.

'Well, uncle, I assure you I shall value this very much, and lay it up with the rest of my wedding presents; and, by-the-by, I have never showed you all the fine things my kind friends have presented to me. Good old Mrs Waddell of Waddell Mains has presented me with a most beautiful antique silver cup, which, it seems, was the Major's christening bowl.'

'It will be ancient enough then, nae doot', observed Uncle Adam.

'My excellent aunts have sent me a very handsome teapot, and - '

'A fool and his money's soon parted; they had very little to do to send ony such thing.'

'Why surely, uncle, you know it is the custom, all the world over, for persons in my situation to receive presents, and - '

'Miss /

'Miss Bell Black, I've seen something mair o' the world than you've done; and I can tell ye some o' its customs that ye maybe dinna ken yet; in Russia, for instance, the present to persons in your situation is - '

'Oh! for Heaven's sake!' - interrupted Miss Bell, with
1)
an instinctive dread of the knout - "

He is a fearsomely direct, crusty old man with unsuspected affections. At the first sight of Gertrude, his heart is wonderfully softened towards her, for in her every feature, she recalls to his mind the beauty of his early lost love, Lizzie Lundy, the huntsman's daughter. Already, up at the Castle, the ferret-like Miss Pratt has pointed out Gertrude's extraordinary resemblance to the portrait of Lizzie as the Goddess Diana. Mrs St. Clair, on hearing these comparisons, always evinces a painful reaction and has recurrence to fainting fits. She is also perturbed at the growing hold which the fascinating Colonel Delmour exercises over her daughter's affections.

The graceful, indolent pace of life among the epicures of Rossville is broken up for Mrs St. Clair, Gertrude and her cousin Lyndsay, an unpremeditated witness, by the mysterious appearance and midnight visits of a sinister American stranger whose presence obviously terrifies Mrs St. Clair into abject obedience to his every request. Bribed by a payment of £500, borrowed from Uncle Adam, the stranger disappears.

At this time, the Earl of Rossville dies suddenly, leaving Gertrude as Countess. As the elder Mr Delmour had himself succeeded /

1) The Inheritance Vol. 1. p. 257.

succeeded to the dukedom of a cousin, he formally expresses his desire to fulfill his late uncle's wishes with regard to a marriage with his cousin. Gertrude politely declines, and the politician in surprise and in some pique takes a "very distant and stately
1)
farewell."

Shortly after this Mrs St Clair and her daughter read of the shipwreck of an American packet off the coast of Ireland, with a description of those who perished including one that tallies with the appearance of Jacob Lewiston, their persecutor.

With this cloud removed, Gertrude gaily returns to her life as chatelaine of Rossville. Gradually however she allows the influence of the extravagant Colonel Delmour to undermine that of the quiet Edward Lyndsay, who had encouraged her in deeds of charity and reform for her tenantry on the estate.

Very much against Mrs St. Clair's wishes, the Rossville party repair to London where Gertrude is caught up in the vortex of whirling pleasures, in which a brilliant but worthless society tries to kill ennui. Gertrude soon becomes exhausted by the pace and her confiding love for Delmour receives many a rebuff from that capricious gamester. Lyndsay, by an unexpected visit on the eve of a splendid ball, tries to recall Gertrude's mind to offices of charity, which she has left undone at home, but she turns from him in shame and offended pride. To add to her irritation, she is affronted by relatives belonging to the pretentious London trade class.

Mr /

1) The Inheritance, p. 37 vol. 1.

Mr Augustus Larkins a "pretty young man", with "regular features, very pink cheeks, very black eyebrows, and what was intended for a very smart expression", torments Gertrude with the following conversation

- "You have, of course, been in town, 'mem?"

Gertrude replies in the affirmative.

"And which of the houses did you give the preference to?"

She had not visited the theatres.

"No sure! is it possible, mem, to have been in town without seeing either of the houses? How prodigiously unfortunate! But", with a significant smile to Miss Lilly, "I hope we shall have the pleasure of showing your cousin the lions by-and-bye. In town we call it showing the lions to show the sights and shows to our country cousins."

"Oh, that will be delightful! Won't it, cousin?" asked the simple Lilly; but her cousin only coloured with contempt at the idea.¹⁾

At length her Mother's ill-health compels Gertrude to accompany Mrs St. Clair to Cheltenham and from there to Scotland again. Delmour, much to Gertrude's grief and her Mother's joy, dallies in London, appalled at the prospect of boredom in the North, while the season is still at its height in the capital.

When he eventually does arrive at Rossville he finds a gross, overbearing American installed there seemingly as master, the very Jacob Lewiston, who was presumed to have perished by shipwreck. The reason for his influence over the horrified Mrs St. /

1) The Inheritance Vol 1. p. 416, 417.

St. Clair and Gertrude, is at last disclosed - he is no other than Gertrude's father. The nurse, who had reared her so faithfully, Marian la Motte, was Lizzie Lundy's daughter. Mrs St. Clair had prevailed on Marian and her husband to effect the change that they might all benefit in the inheritance of Rossville.

Colonel Delmour, his mind in conflicting chaos, after writing a letter of protestations, departs to consult his brother in London, leaving Gertrude in the hands of her newly-found father.

At this juncture, Lyndsay arrives, to find both ladies in a state of collapse. To him, Gertrude discloses the story distractedly, and Lyndsay, very coolly sifting the evidence, at length compels Lewiston to admit that he is only a cousin of Gertrude's father who had been Marian la Motte's husband and who had perished at sea years ago. As Mrs St. Clair had not detected the difference, he had passed himself off as the girl's parent. Lyndsay, by settling a small sum on the blackmailer, persuades him to depart.

Gertrude is heartbroken at Delmour's desertion, for on his brother's death, he is now in a position as Marquis of Haslingden to raise Gertrude from poverty and obscurity, but Delmour is actuated by more worldly motives than love.

When Lyndsay discloses this to Gertrude by showing her a letter received from Delmour, Gertrude abandons herself to melancholy.

From this state she is roused by the rough kindness of one she had forgotten, namely Uncle Adam, who rejoices in that she is a grand-daughter of his beloved Lizzie Lundy, and bears her off to his own little estate of Bloompark. Mrs St. Clair in a violent /

violent state is removed from Rossville too, and taken to her sister's house. Later she departs for France.

In time, Gertrude marries the devoted Lyndsay, who succeeds to the Rossville estates, on the death by duelling of the unhappy Colonel Delmour and so, at last, Gertrude enters into the inheritance rightfully as Countess of Rossville.

Though this plot is thin in parts, (one, for instance being Mrs St. Clair's failure to detect Lewiston's pose, when she had herself seen the real Lewiston as Marian la Motte's husband.) it nevertheless has a vigour which gives some pace and animation to the novel. The suspense of the reader too, is well maintained to the end, though it is one of curiosity rather than of anxiety, for there is an absence of reality in the regularised outbursts of violence from Colonel Delmour, Mrs St. Clair and Lewiston. And yet the tone of the whole book is elevated above that of Marriage. "We are raised above the petty miseries and tracasseries of Marriage into a sphere where¹⁾ higher passions are felt to be at work for higher objects." Gertrude's anguish is real enough, when she is finally confronted with absolute proof of her lover's shallowness, in his desertion of her in her utter need. In fact, the whole situation of the generous and loving Gertrude, wilfully blinding herself to Delmour's less amiable, but perfectly obvious traits, because of her love for the fine gentleman, is most convincingly portrayed. Much less convincing are Gertrude's two lovers, the arrogant, unpleasant Delmour and the grave, moralising Lyndsay. Although Gertrude is the most human and attractive of Miss Ferrier's heroines /

1) Scottish Review. Vol. 34, p.70.

heroines, the reader, accepting Miss Ferrier's portrait, cannot believe that this spirited girl would have chosen either the one man or the other.

Though she is severe on Gertrude's rash, romantic love and sees to it that reform safely sets in by the end of the second volume, Miss Ferrier is in the tradition, with Fanny Burney, Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth, of women novelists who portray melodramatic villains. The ladies really liked a rakehell or a Byronic gentleman, - in their novels, at least; practically in every book he makes his appearance; sometimes gay and young, though unpleasantly unprincipled as Henry Crawford scheming to entrap the affections of the decorous Miss Fanny Price;¹⁾ or more mellow in age and manners, a polished courtier, practised in chicanery, like the blandishing Sir Ulick O' Shane;²⁾ or distinguished chiefly by hauteur, consumed by the sin of pride, family pride, as Colonel Delmour and Mr. D'Arcy.³⁾ The latter indeed is even elevated to the position of hero because of his high principles, but though considerably chastened by the biting wit of Miss Elizabeth Bennet, remains to the end a distant, and in some ways, almost Byronic figure. All have this in common that they are irresistible to women, (save to a few of the discriminating heroines, who dutifully rebuff them) and, conscious of their charm, exert it only on the desired object. The result is, that these gentlemen are often unpardonably rude.

Perhaps Samuel Richardson, the ladies' novelist, began the /

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- 1) Mansfield Park. J. Austen.
 - 2) Ormond. Maria Edgeworth.
 - 3) Pride and Prejudice. J. Austen.

the vogue, by introducing a dangerously attractive villain, Lovelace, in *Clarissa Harlowe*, who to the little bookseller's horror, soon usurped an impeccable hero's rightful place in female readers' favour. Certainly Richardson gave the pattern for ladies' gentlemen, too consistently emotional, as Lyndsay and Delmour in *The Inheritance*.

Susan Ferrier followed the Sir Charles Grandison pattern in portraying Lyndsay, just as Maria Edgeworth built her Irish Ormond on the model of Tom Jones. There is no doubt as to which of these is the more human and interesting. Unlike Tom Jones, Ormond shows a steady development, compatible with the reforming principles of Maria Edgeworth, but, Lyndsay is a paragon throughout, though occasionally Susan Ferrier allows him a certain grave charm. Ironically enough, the authoress herself remarks that "few readers are fond of digressions,¹⁾ especially when of a moral or didactic nature", and perhaps she shows a modicum of sympathy with the other side, when she makes Delmour remark in reply to Gertrude's exclamation:- "Lyndsay love me!" - "Yes! in his own cold-blooded methodistical way."²⁾

Nevertheless, Lyndsay is made the mouthpiece of Susan Ferrier's ideas on propriety, on religion and on literature. The latter are sadly illuminating; such, Klopstock, a second rate Milton, is classed as first poet of Germany. Shakespeare, Burns, the 'profane and licentious works' of Lord Byron, and Moore are all to appear in improved editions. This suggestion links Miss Ferrier with the eighteenth century, that could 'translate' Chaucer /

1) *The Inheritance* Vol. 1. p. 303.

2) *The Inheritance* Vol 11. p. 207.

Chaucer, and turn the rustic Nut Brown Maid into the small-town Henry and Emma, though Miss Ferrier's improvements were for morals, not for literary style. The works of Fielding and Smollett even of Voltaire and Rousseau "are passing away like noxious exhalations."¹⁾

Miss Ferrier's literary values had unfortunately become entangled with her evangelicalism, and it is significant that she put the latter criticism on the lips of a clergyman, and that in the same passage she should pass a scathing remark on lukewarm religion.

"Mr Delmour had a genteel horror at everything he deemed approaching to what he thought Methodism, though a most zealous supporter of the church in so far, but no farther, than it was connected with the state."²⁾

Though an admirer of Wesley, whose name she mentions several times, Miss Ferrier is no narrow sectarian. Her own mother, Helen Coutts, was an Episcopalian, while others of the family were Presbyterians. Quoting from the liberal-minded English preacher, she condemns those "who pin their faith upon the sleeve of some favourite preacher," or others who "seem to think salvation confined within the four walls of the particular church in which they happen to sit"³⁾ - types all too prevalent in the Scotland of the early 19th century.

However there is one literary judgment in "The Inheritance" not so formally given, which reflects credit on Miss Ferrier. Gertrude had prevailed on Uncle Adam to make a short visit at Rossville, /

1) The Inheritance Vol. 1. p. 392.

2) The Inheritance. Vol. 1. p.389.

1) The Inheritance. Vol. 1. p.388.

Rossville, a visit which was prolonged for two reasons, one, because he could daily gaze at the portrait of his beloved Lizzy Lundie in the Turret-Room, made over to him for his own use, and secondly, because of his stealthy, pleasurable reading of Guy Mannering, which he had taken up "in a paroxysm of ennui one day".

As Sir Walter Scott and Mr Ferrier's other colleagues at the Session House had dubbed Susan's father "Uncle Adam", Miss Ferrier is no doubt reflecting what Mr Ferrier's generation had felt about novels, when she says:-

"Uncle Adam had been no novel reader in his younger days, and with him, as with many other excellent, but we must suppose, mistaken people, novels and mental imbecility were ideas inseparably united in his brain."¹⁾

Perhaps the prejudice was not altogether unpardonable. Francis Jeffrey recalls, in a preface to his review of Scots novels in the Edinburgh Review, July 1809, that, in his youth, "a greater mass of trash and rubbish never disgraced the press of any country than the ordinary Novels that filled and supported our circulation libraries down nearly to the time of Miss Edgeworth's appearance. However, since the appearance of Waverley, all this has been signally and happily changed; and the rabble rout of abominations driven from our confines for ever."

Miss Ferrier is paying the same tribute to Scott in a delightful, though indirect way, when she shows how "Uncle Adam's /

1) The Inheritance. Vol. 11. p. 84.

Adam's whole being was completely absorbed in this (to him) new creation; while at the same time, he blushed even in private at his own weakness in filling his head with such idle havers, and indeed never could have held it up again if he had been detected with a volume in his hand.¹⁾ Being a dour and honest reader, Uncle Adam would not skip, and, as his anxiety about that "scoondrel Glossin", prevailed over all considerations, his stay was prolonged to see "that rascal hanged, if hanging wasna owre gude for him."²⁾

Uncle Adam himself is a wonderful creation, jealously guarding from the world, and sometimes from himself, the existence of a very warm heart, so that, although he buys the estate of Bloompark because it is on the site of his former humble home he cannot bring himself to occupy it, and thus proclaim to the world his deep-buried sentiment, and so, this frosty old man lives in a comfortless, rather squalid little house, much to the mortification of Miss Bell Black, his pretentious young relative, who had designs on Bloompark. Uncle Adam is at his most terrifying and sardonic with Miss Bell and takes great pleasure in provoking her, so that she discloses her selfish motives in bursts of ill-temper. In her dress, her language, her petty ambitions, Miss Bell Black conveys much of the atmosphere of a small Scottish country-town. She was "really a very pretty girl: she had a pretty figure, pretty features, pretty hair, a pretty compelxion, a pretty bonnet, a pretty shawl and a pretty watch. But over this prettiness was diffused an intolerable /

1) The Inheritance Vol. 11. p. 85

2) The Inheritance Vol.11., p.163.

intolerable air of folly, affectation and conceit which completely marred the effect of her charms." Her fiancé Major Waddell was a very passable sort of person for a nabob; he had a dingy bronze complexion, tawny eyes, tolerable teeth and a long, wrinkled smirking baboonish physiognomy.¹⁾ "Fule and tawpie", Uncle Adam would mutter at sight of them. As Miss Bell had an exaggerated sense of propriety and of the position of a married woman, - "one in my situation", and "the eyes of the world" were phrases constantly on her lips. After her marriage however, Mrs Major Waddell as she insisted on being called, was not immune from further attacks from the alarming old man, whose deceptively mild manner at times drew Mrs Waddell to make further blunders, and was a prelude to a storm of wrath.

Vulgarity, ignorance, social-climbing are all attacked in the person of Mrs Waddell, whose general character has points in common with Mrs Elton in Jane Austen's "Emma". Most comic of all perhaps is the scene in which Mrs Major displays her wifely importance by torturing her spouse to change his boots, his stockings, to suffocate himself in clothes, so that the gallant Major is stricken with "flattered vanity and personal suffering" much as Sir Sampson was by Lady MacLaughlan in Marriage. Indeed, this kind of conjugal scene, Miss Ferrier enjoys with a particular malice, that renders her satire deadly in effect. Miss Lilly, the younger sister, as bridesmaid, accompanies Mrs Waddell and the Major on their bridal tour in the /

1) "The Inheritance" Vol. 1. p. 93.

the lakes. She is vulgar in a more sickly, less robust fashion; vulgar in the way of scented note-paper, evergreen seal and French motto. Her letter to Gertrude, describing her holiday, is a triumph of bad taste, the product of a giggling, middle-class young woman who draws mountains on watch-papers and interlards her terrible platitudes with French phrases.

In both sisters, Miss Ferrier stresses a painful affectation of language: with Miss Lilly this is even more obvious when she migrates south as the wife of the sprig young Cockney, Augustus Larkins of London, a kinsman surely of Fanny Burney's Bramptons in *Evelina*. Maria Edgeworth is striking at the same weakness in her Irish absentees who attempt to obliterate the soft Irish from their tongue and shows their English neighbours ridiculing them. What she says of Lady Clonbrony might equally, in another setting, apply to the Scottish Miss Bell Black:- "a naturally free, familiar, precipitate Irish manner had been schooled into a sober, cold, still, stiff deportment,¹⁾ which she mistook for English".

Apart from the excellent strong Scots tongue of Mr Adam, Susan Ferrier has allowed many Scotticisms to creep into the passages dealing with the middle-class Scots like the Black family and Miss Pratt.

Lord Rossville supplies another characteristic Scottish touch. On her admittance under his roof, Gertrude is submitted to a ponderous peroration on the various ramifications of the family tree. This weakness for genealogy is truly Scottish, and Lord /

1) *The Absentee*. M. Edgeworth, p.93.

Lord Rossville embarks on this theme whenever an opportunity offers itself and there is an audience to be impressed. He is himself an excellent satiric study: the good peer continually suffers from a plethora of words, which threatens to choke him if not given egress. He is a splendid example of the "sesquipedalian and null"¹⁾ and offers an excellent target for the darting attacks of Miss Pratt. Indeed it is from her that he actually receives a mortal stroke. With the same startling suddenness, death smote Lord Rossville, as it had done the Laird of Glenfern in Marriage, and the macabre touch is not wanting here either. One snowy winter afternoon, Miss Pratt had obtained a lift in a huge hearse to his lordship's castle door. The shock of seeing his second cousin descend from such a vehicle, proved too great for the Earl, and after a restless night, he was found in the morning, a lifeless corpse. This incident, Miss Ferrier, no doubt derived from a tale of her brother, Walter Ferrier, who had come across some soldiers' wives and children in a hearse on a desolate moor in South Scotland.

As the Laird of Glenfern had been a hard-working farmer, so Lord Rossville, in a more elevated station, as landowner had improved his estate with draining, embanking, planting, road-making, etc. and had installed hot and cold pipes in the washing house, new ovens, larders, baths, "with all the wonder-working, steam-going apparatus of the kitchen" not to mention Dutch tiles in the dairy. But Miss Ferrier does not recount all this to show his excellence as an innovator, but rather to emphasize his tiresomeness/

1) Famous Scots Series - The Blackwood Group - by Sir George Douglas. p. 126.

tiresomeness and complacence, like that of the Bailie on the Calton Hill¹⁾, who saw, in the panorama stretched before him only the chimneys of the Leith glass~~e~~factory in which he had a share, so Lord Rossville regarded nature's works as a "sort of account book in which were registered all his own petty doings."²⁾

The critic in the Saturday Review (V.153, Feb. 18th 1882) remarks that "it might not be easy to analyse the reasons which make it amusing to read the utterances of a bore who would be absolutely intolerable in real life "but that the power of making bores amusing was possessed in a marked degree both by Miss Austen and by Miss Ferrier." Of course, the reader can easily extricate himself from the presence of the bores and has the amusement of watching the other characters writhe in vain. As has been said, there is a great improvement in the construction of "The Inheritance" as compared with that of "Marriage", for the very reason that the satiric characters are linked up with the plot: perhaps, in the case of Miss Pratt, there is a certain drawback in linking this lady in unrelenting manner "with the whole course of the tale and with the most interesting of the scenes of passion and suspense."³⁾ Miss Ferrier had obviously herself felt, (probably during years of attention towards that fine but irascible old man, Walter Ferrier, her father,) the irritant effect of countless petty interruptions in her life, and as she often stated, regarded these little rubs and not the grave obstacles, as the most difficult trials for the patience of mankind to bear. In the person of Miss Pratt, she found her tormentor-in-chief, and by /

1) Marriage, Vol.1., p.329
 2) The Inheritance, Vol. 1. p.44.
 3) Scottish Review, V.54, p.70.

by the reaction of each member of the family circle to this busy-body, Miss Ferrier very amusingly reveals their different characters. The petulant Delmour whose most obvious hints and rudeness fail to effect the departure of the lady, like a handsome, sulky schoolboy gives vent to his feelings by standing on her gown; Lord Rossville whose dignity she attacks on all occasions, is appalled and speechless with wrath in her presence; Lyndsay is patient and kind; Gertrude quiet but displeased by her gossip; but it is in company with Uncle Adam that Miss Ferrier manipulates Miss Pratt with her greatest skill. During the old man's sojourn at Rossville, Miss Pratt, while remaining the same Miss Pratt fundamentally, shows a completely new side to her character. She is all attention and kindness to Uncle Adam; both are staying at Rossville because of recalcitrant domestics; both hate Colonel Delmour for his haughtiness and condescension, which the old man is quick to resent. Gradually however Uncle Adam suspects Miss Pratt's true nature, and far from being an "oocommon sensible woman", after a few games at backgammon, the old man thinks - "I wish she may be the thing after all; she kens owre weel -
 1)
 how to shake the dice."

Miss Pratt is undoubtedly an individual but she also has the common characteristics of a particular society - a busy, tattling and gossiping society of Edinburgh spinsters; she is the second cousin to many noble families and is always indefatigably sure of a welcome: but she has no feeling for the dignity and dedorum of pompous personages, and will waive off a ducal rebuke /

1) The Inheritance Vol. 11. p. 188

rebuke with - "He's very bilious today; his eyes are like
boiled gooseberries, honest man!"¹⁾ Her chief characteristic
though, is her endless quotation of one Anthony Whyte, her nephew,
a young gentleman who never appears on the scene, though his
witticisms are ever on Miss Pratt's tongue.

Miss Pratt, for the vividness of her character, bids
fair to match her English counterpart, Miss Bates in Jane
Austen's "Emma". Perhaps there is nothing quite so good in
Miss Pratt as Miss Bates's artless self-interruptions, and for
sheer good-humour and spate of words, Miss Bates is still untouched,
but were either Miss Bates or Miss Pratt to bear down upon the
reader in real life, there would be little to choose between these
formidable exponents of gossip.

Two characters who are associated with the more violent
and melodramatic elements of the plot are Mrs St Clair and Lewiston.
There is a great lack of reality about the latter, both as an
American and as a man. John Galt had yet to give to the public
his creation of an American based on an eccentric living model
in his tale of Lawrie Todd, but Miss Ferrier evidently wanted a
backwoods villain to contrast with her drawing-room perjurer,
Colonel Delmour. The result is, that Jacob Lewiston is neither
probable in self nor in action. As Professor Saintsbury remarked -
"a business-like scoundrel would not have forced his way into
Rossville Castle".

The relations between Mrs St. Clair and Gertrude are
interestingly worked out. There is a certain glamour attached
to /

1) The Inheritance. Vol. p. 121.

to Mrs St. Clair's personality, like that of a retired actress ; the conflict in her mind between self-interest and remorse for her deception produces a situation almost tragic, but postures, hysterics and violence detract from the effect. Clashes between the two women resound throughout the novel in a series of interviews, and Miss Ferrier by laying stress on the schemes of Mrs St. Clair and on her alternating moods of passion and tenderness as she works Gertrude to her will prepares the reader for the disclosure that she is not the girl's mother. The heroine, bewildered but spirited is always charming, because she is so human, and towards the end of the story in particular, the reader has the strong impression of this human being, like a character in a Greek tragedy, caught in a web of fate from which she has no power to extricate herself; the chapter headings from Sophocles and Euripides at this point of the story, are thus significant.

As in Marriage, there are some satiric scenes more loosely connected with the novel; for example, Gertrude's visit to the Fairbairn family, to see that most motherly mother, Mrs Fairbairn who regarded even her husband merely as the parent of her offspring. The satire is hard here and inflicted with something of the tartness of a spinster viewing with disapproval a foolish, doting mother.

There is the same, sharpness in the sketch of the hapless Miss Betty Duguid, a single lady, who is nevertheless burdened with all the trials of the married state, for she carries out endless commissions for her married friends and for their families.

"She /

"She was expected to attend all acouchements, christenings, deaths, chestings and burials; but she was seldom asked to a marriage, and never to any party of pleasure".

As for the tone of "The Inheritance" as a whole, it is not predominantly Scottish. The reader is told that Rossville is situated on the West Coast of Scotland, and near the opening of the novel, there is a description of Earl Rossville's rolling lands and broad streams which is a fair general picture, though, as with the other novel Marriage, landscape is but slightly sketched. For the main part however, the society depicted at Rossville might as well be English as Scottish, always excepting Miss Pratt and Uncle Adam; only occasionally does Susan Ferrier give us traits that are characteristically northern. One Scottish scene is startlingly marked out for the reader in Gertrude's visit to a poor tenant. The young woman had her own ideas on charity, but "the dirtiness of the houses, the coarseness of the people, the ugliness of the children, were all revolting to her fine spun notions of the beauty of benevolence, and she longed to discover some fair specimens of elegant woe." Miss Ferrier has given two grim pictures of a damp cottage on the Rossville estates: the squalid interior, "the palpable obscure", the authoress calls it, shelters a sickly man with a bouncing, strident-voiced wife. On Gertrude inquiring with what she could supply the couple, the woman, who is her spouse's mouthpiece, shouts:- "A suit o' gude bein comfortable dead claes, Tammees wad set ye better than aw the braw chyres an carpets i' the toon."¹⁾ Gertrude was shocked at this, but on a second visit /

1) The Inheritance Vol. 1. p. 34.

visit later on, with Lyndsay and Uncle Adam, the wrath of the latter was terrible when he found the "wundin' sheet" airing before the fire, while the sickman was cramped up in a damp press-bed. Mr. Ramsay hurled the offending "dead-duds" into the fire. Gruesome though the scene is, there is something characteristically Scots about the desire for decent "wise-like" burial. The recurring phrase:- "he cann be fashed with onything" suggests that Miss Ferrier had her late reading of Mrs Hamilton's "Cottagers" in mind.

"The Inheritance" then marks Miss Ferrier at the height of her powers; here she has achieved a fine novel; the story neatly soldered, the characters, rich in abundance and vigour, and of these characters, the Scottish flavour predominant in the greatest, that masterly presentation of a hard old man, still harbouring in the core of his being, a sentimental recollection of the past.

_____oOo_____

DESTINY. 1831.IV.

"There is a lady here whom I think you must know - Miss Ferrier: her father is a very old man, and she, who is not very young and has indifferent health, secludes herself almost entirely¹⁾ with him."

In those words of Mrs Grant of Laggan, written in June 1824, lies the sad history of Susan Ferrier's later years. The grand climacteric of her life as a novelist had come with "The Inheritance"; her third and last novel *Destiny* was not to be published until 1831. In the interval, her father had died, June 1829, and her eyes had troubled her grievously, so sadness and resignation creep over the pages of *Destiny*; though she attacks the old sins sharply, as only she knew how, the boisterous pleasure has largely gone out of the business, and pietistic moralisings wear down the vitality of the novel.

The book opens with a picture of a Highland laird in his prime, the Chief of Glenroy, who first married for love the beautiful orphan of a poor "hundredth" cousin, and who, having been left a widower by her with two children, married a second time to suit his rank, the Lady Elizabeth Waldegrave, widow of the Hon. Edward Waldegrave, a fashionable spendthrift. The Englishwoman was soon installed at Glenroy, where, with her daughter Florinda aged five, who was brought up with Norman and Edward /

1) *Memoir and Correspondence of Susan Ferrier*, p. 207.

Edith, the Chief's children, she began a stormy but brief married career.

To begin with, Glenroy, with the lady's consent, had adopted his brother-in-law's son Reginald. Lady Elizabeth's partiality for the young heir to an ancient title and noble fortune, had been secured by his childish predilection for the pretty Florinda, rather than for the grave young Edith and Lady Elizabeth was foolish enough to side in the children's feud. Already the lady had tried to exert her authority by ridding the house of a perpetual inmate, the laird of Benbowie, a snuffy old man, devoted by habit to Glenroy. Failing in this, she then demanded that the unruly Reginald should be turned out of doors. The Chief's indifference to her demands so exasperated Lady Elizabeth, that on hearing of the death of Lord Waldegrave's two sons, she immediately announced her intention of moving Florinda to her grandsire's home, counting it degradation for the future Baroness Waldegrave to remain longer under the roof of a "coarse-mannered, overbearing Highlander."¹⁾ As Glenroy indignantly refused to live in London for most of the year, a final separation, was agreed upon between the chief and his lady. The departure of Mother and daughter from Glenroy caused the utmost satisfaction to everyone, save to the gentle little Edith, who mourned the loss of her cousin Florinda.

After this, a life of carousal began at the Castle; the boys were educated by an English tutor, while Edith was left to the care of a devoted retainer of the house of Glenroy, a delightful /

1) Destiny, Vol 1. p.22.

delightful old woman, wise in her own way, Molly Macaulay.

Glenroy however, soon found he had exchanged one domestic tyranny for another, that of the minister of the parish, an uncouth incumbent, Mr. M'Dow. Another thorn in his flesh was his kinsman, the Laird of Inch Orran that "particular man" who capriciously decided to make Ronald Malcolm, eldest son of Captain Malcolm, a half-pay officer, and cousin of Glenroy, his heir, instead of Norman, the Chief's son, with the stipulation that no money could be touched until Ronald was twenty-six. Failing the said Ronald Malcolm, his heirs etc. the whole was to go to his father without restriction. The gentle Malcolms of Lochdhu were as astonished at the will as Glenroy, who furiously contemptuous with the "Donald begs" as he called them, infected his children and nephew with a like feeling of antagonism.

Soon after this, Ronald departed for sea. The Malcolms as relatives of the fortunate Ronald were treated with greater deference and the splay-footed Moderate M'Dow even dared to aspire to the hand of Lucy, the eldest daughter. A definite refusal was returned.

Not long after this, the Malcolms had a great affliction to bear, - the supposed loss of the manly young Ronald at sea. At this point in the novel, Miss Ferrier has the opportunity of introducing the spirit of true Christian consolation in the person of the Evangelistic Mr Stuart, who visits the bereaved family.

The news of Ronald's death has a softening influence at Glenroy and Edith becomes a constant visitor to the family at Lochdhu.

Some years after this, heralded by one of Molly Macaulay's famous dreams, comes the intelligence of Reginald's father's death; he had left directions that his son should be entered at one of the English universities and that he should thereafter set forth on the Grand Tour of the Continent. Glenroy refuses to allow Norman to become "tamed into insignificance in the South"¹⁾ and so Reginald set off alone, after a fond farewell to his now affianced Edith.

The Chief's daughter, a tender and trusting person noticed with anguish that Reginald's letters from Europe became meagre and less satisfactory, but she still cherished them.

"She knew not - who in early life does know? - that such treasurings up of the frail records of human love prove but as landmarks to note where the tide of passion and of sorrow hath been"²⁾. It was not only an older but a dispirited Miss Ferrier who wrote these words.

One bright summer's day, Ronald Malcolm, now a tall, sunburnt youth returned to Lochdhu having survived many arduous adventures. There he finds the house deserted and learns from an old woman who does not recognise him that the family now live at Inch Orran in prosperous style, blessed throughout the countryside for the good they do. All this comfort has been attained through the death by drowning of the oldest son, for his inheritance, by the will of the late laird, had passed without restrictions to his father.

Ronald on hearing this, made his way to Inch Orran, and /

1) Destiny Vol. 1. p. 223.

2) Destiny Vol. 1. p. 230.

and from the shadow of the ancient ruined tower watched his family within the house. So happy did they seem, that Ronald, thinking he was forgotten, rushed away.

Now the destiny of the house of Glenroy began to be fulfilled. Norman, the chief's son was suddenly smitten in the pride of his youth. "Glenroy's mind reeled beneath the stroke - all was dark within". Henceforth there is traced the gradual decay of the florid, imperious Glenroy into a state of muddled peevish irascibility.

The chief thereafter had only one thought, and that was to behold the last living male heir of the house - Sir Reginald, who strangely enough did not appear. When he at length arrived, it was noticeable that this pale, languorous gentleman suffered as much from embarrassment as from emotion. Glenroy, though arrogant and despotic towards Edith, Benbowie, and Mrs Macaulay, leaned on Reginald pathetically and childishly. Sir Reginald urged Edith to marry him without delay, but there was a desperation and joylessness in the plea. This project was frustrated by the chief himself, who was in terror lest they should desert his house and him.

One morning, a chance paragraph in a paper announcing the return to England of Lady Waldegrave and her daughter Florinda, the Baroness, caused Reginald to act strangely. Soon after this, Glenroy received a letter from Lady Florinda, offering to come on a visit; though Sir Reginald strongly recommended that a refusal should be sent, a letter was at length despatched accepting the proposal.

After /

After a difficult and painful sojourn, the two fashionable ladies departed, having brought Glenroy to transports of wrath and gout. While Edith and Reginald were conducting Florinda across the ferry at Glenroy, a great storm arose. In the anxiety of the moment, Reginald forgot all propriety and in the anguished tenderness of his care for Florinda, revealed to Edith, the dreadful truth.

A brief interval of stupefaction followed for Edith at Inch Orran, where the party had taken shelter, but when she had slightly recovered, she signified to Reginald, her desire to set him free. In a convulsion of feelings, Reginald departed for Dunshiera, his own estate, and soon Edith too left her kind friends and returned to Glenroy.

Fresh sorrow awaited her there, for the chief had taken a stroke of the palsy. She had further torture to endure, when Reginald reappeared, as the old man had no pleasure save when these two were beside his couch, and was oblivious to the love drama enacted before his very eyes.

At length Reginald departed, not only from Glenroy but from Scotland and Edith drained the cup of bitterness soon afterwards, when she read of his marriage with Florinda, Baroness Waldegrave.

For three long years Glenroy lingered on in dotage¹⁾ "unconscious of evil, unsusceptible of pleasures" and after his death, Edith took refuge again with the Malcolms at Inch Orran, but /

1) Destiny. Vol 11. p. 147.

but this time, in a destitute state as the result of her father's ostentation in life.

Edith's only relative, a half-sister of her Mother's, a Mrs Ribley, contemptuously referred to by the Chief in his life, as a "Cockney cit", now offered her an abode at least, if not a home, and, Mrs Malcolm, feeling that the change might restore Edith urged her to accept.

With faithful Molly Macaulay then, Edith took up residence in London in the milieu of successful tradesmen. By her patience, she won the respect of the dull Mrs. Ribley.

Molly Macaulay, while residing in a little cottage on the outskirts of London fell in with an attractive stranger, who was amazingly well acquainted with Glenroy, Lochdhu and Inch Orran. His name was Captain Melcomb, and he was introduced to Edith by some new friends of hers - Admiral and Lady Arabella Conway.

Periodically Edith went to stay with her vain and worldly step-mother who had formed a selfish attachment for the girl, and when with this old woman, she caught painful glimpses of the dissipated and loveless household of Sir Reginald, who by this time had bitterly regretted his marriage. Yet, when bankruptcy and dishonour came upon them, it was Edith who tried to reconcile Reginald and Florinda, and to aid them. However the husband and wife parted, she to Naples, he to Paris, to continue their extravagant and joyless careers.

Meanwhile Edith found balm in the deep attachment of Captain Melcomb, who gradually revealed that he was the long lost playmate of her youth - Ronald Malcolm. In time, Edith returned to /

to Inch Orran to break the news of the exile's restoration, and when Ronald stepped off the boat one glorious summer evening, it was a joyful household that welcomed him. Soon afterwards, his wedding with Edith rounded off the happiness of all and brought to a peaceful conclusion, the destiny of the chief's daughter.

This plot strongly suggests a return to the old disintegrated gallery series of Marriage, only in Destiny the types are no longer original. Lady Elizabeth is the counterpart of Lady Juliana; Edith well nigh rivals Mary in insipidity; Florinda - Adelaide in sophisticated beauty. There are too the usual parasites attendant on showy households. Dr. Redgill is replaced by a less amusing and more repulsive hanger-on - M'Dow. In fact, any animation that there is in Destiny comes from the severe strokes and so, unpleasant characters are unduly arresting.

Disintegration is furthered by a rift in the plot: the Edith-Florinda-Reginald situation which seems to be the major theme reaches an emotional crisis, only to dwindle away to insignificance, as Ronald's reunion with Edith is tacked on at the end. Besides, the whole plot hinges on the voluntary exile of Ronald inspired by an ultra-romantic boyish whim, and this casts an air of unreality over the entire novel, though the actual incident is described with some power of pathos. That romantic note is again sounded when Edith is united to Ronald in the end and their situation recalls that of another girl and her long separated sailor lover, - the Ann of Jane Austen's "Persuasion". This too, was a last novel, in which the authoress seemed to be gradually approaching a new concept of life and perhaps of her art /

art. But the serene charm of the new romantic element in Persuasion is absent in Destiny, where only the circumstances, and not the treatment of the tale, suggest romance. In the final scenes of Destiny, emphasis is laid, not on the glad reunion of the lovers, but on the meek joy of Ronald's family at his return. How will the Mother sustain the unlooked-for blessing of her son's survival, is the question immediately uppermost, even in the minds of the lovers themselves. It is the spectacle of Christian resignation in bereavement, ministered unto by a good evangelistical pastor, that interests Miss Ferrier in the situation and not the growing love of the young people. Miss Ferrier had not won through to a last quiet and genial period as had Miss Austen.

There is a great change in tone, even in the course of the novel itself. The raillery and enjoyment with which she hits off the grandiose Highland chief in the opening chapters, and the wholesale energy of the M'Dow caricature fade out; after the disappearance of the hero Ronald at sea, an enervation pervades the story, the dialogue is trite: the sentiments, stale; only in the Cockney chirrupings of Mr Ribley is there even a flicker of the old fun. Perhaps this flatness is due to Miss Ferrier's reforming zeal; she is bent on correction and triumphantly marches her reader, now to an edifying scene, now on a punitive expedition. The theme of death is uppermost in her mind, no doubt, because of her father's recent demise, and we are shown the reactions of various characters to this event; the rapacious relatives at the death of Inch Orran; the Malcolms' acceptance of the supposed loss of Ronald; Glenroy's numb horror at the death /

death of Norman, his son; the pathos of the chief's own death. In an incident, quite apart from the main flow of the novel and somewhat reminiscent of Wordsworth's Michael, Edith is even conducted by Mrs Malcolm on a special visit to two lonely old cottars, who are bearing with fortitude the loss of the child of their old age. It is not surprising then, that this recurring mourning motif should cast a certain depression over the book.

The character who is thrust more upon the reader's attention than any other in *Destiny*, is that of the chief Glenroy. In this study, Lockhart saw the ultimate breaking down and debasement of the Highland character:-

"Sir Walter Scott had fixed the enamel of genius over the last fitful gleams of their half-savage chivalry; but a humbler and sadder scene - the age of lucre - banished clans - of chieftains dwindled into imitation squires - and of chiefs content to barter the recollection of a thousand years for a few gaudy seasons of Almacks and Crockfords - the euthanasia of kilted aldermen and steam-boat pibrochs, was reserved for Miss Ferrier."¹⁾

The aldermen and steam-boat pibrochs might more properly be considered John Galt's province, and although Miss Ferrier gives a powerful sketch of a declining Highland Chief in Glenroy and stresses the town dissipations of his successor, it is not so much to lament the fall of an ancient and honourable house, as to chastise peevish selfishness in the one, and wild excess in the other.

This /

1) Blackwood XXX, Sept. 1831. Noctes Ambrosianne No. LVIII.

This is not a pleasant portrait of a Highland gentleman, such a one as MacLean of Coll or any other of Dr. Johnson's hosts during his tour, whom, with agreeable surprise, he admitted to be very fine gentlemen. Here Celtic pride of ancestry is arrogance, and the famous hospitality, ostentation.

"Superiors? death! and equals? what a curse!
But an inferior not dependant? worse! "

Added to this, little education, strong racial prejudice and utter contempt for his servants and retainers, together with florid good looks and a high temper, make up the man, who seems bound very appropriately for the fate meted out to him - gout, paralysis - then utter imbecility. It is a masterly study in irascibility.

In many characteristics, particularly in narrowness of outlook, Glenroy is an amplification of the Laird of Glenfern in Marriage. Both wrest the utmost from the soil, only Glenroy's acres are more numerous and his rent-roll, larger. There is, too, an impression that Glenroy belongs to the new order of landlords. Despite the feasting and the piping and the bonfires associated with the barbaric chiefs of old, Glenroy is more the grasping owner than the father of his people. In contrast, Miss Ferrier shows a benevolent master when she makes the old woman at Lochdhu tell Ronald about his father, the new laird of Inch Orran.

"Mony's the poor craater that would ha'e been trailin' owre the saut sea, wi' their wives and their childer, awa' frae a' their kith and kin and toilin' their hearts out in a far-off land, if it had not pleased God to give Inch Orran the hand and the /

the heart to help them - och ay, he's the one that will never drive the poor man off his land, as long as the water rins, and the heather grows."¹⁾

There is a dark suggestion here of evictions, clearances, and emigration.

Like the Laird of Glenfern, Glenroy is intolerant about all things English - English Universities, English titles, English music, arouse his derision - and so it is poetic justice that he should marry a foolish English lady, a wrinkled doll of fashion, reminiscent of the Lady Juliana. Their childish onslaughts against each other, in their ridiculous pride of race, recall the "fleering" Captain Mirvan and vulgar Madame Duval of Fanny Burney's *Evelina*.

The great literary creation however with whom Glenroy invites comparison is an Irish parallel - King Corny of the Black Islands, who appears in Maria Edgeworth's novel - *Ormond*. *Destiny* and *Ormond* indeed have a curiously similar history. Maria Edgeworth completed her book in May 31st 1817, in time for her father's seventy-fourth birthday, which took place during his last severe illness. Both Maria and her father were indomitably cheerful and industrious to the end; Richard Edgeworth even writing King Corny's death and the faithful retainer, Moriarty's history. In the words of Mrs Edgeworth "In all her anguish of mind at his state of health, she, by a wonderful effort of affection and genius, produced those gay and brilliant pages. The interest and delight which her father, ill as he was, took in this beginning, encouraged her to go on and she completed /

1) *Destiny* Vol. 1. p. 240.

completed the story."¹⁾

Tradition says that Susan Ferrier's father was equally proud of and amazed at his daughter's literary talent, but *Destiny* was not finished until two years after Walter Ferrier's death, so that a great sadness clouds the end of the novel.

The two fathers bequeathed some characteristics to Glenroy and King Corny. Walter Ferrier was a vigorous proud old man and must have been a trying invalid. In Glenroy's illnesses, irascibility during his gouty period, and helpless dependence in paralysis, tax the utmost patience of those around him, but even King Corny's gout becomes a cheerful matter, when he remarks: - "Nature knows best, and she says, roar!"

The monarch's astonishing versatility too, is that of Richard Edgeworth, who had invented so many machines, engines and curricles steeples and telegraph posts - only Corny's energy runs in a different direction:-

"for King Corny had with his own hands made a violin and a rat-trap; and had made the best coat, and the best pair of shoes and the best pair of stockings and had made the best dunghill in his dominions; and had made a quarter of a yard of fine lace and had painted a panorama."²⁾

There was of course another Irish original, behind the figure of King Corny, a Mr Corry, who lived in a remote part of Ireland and had "blasted out of the rock on which his house was built, half a kitchen, while he and his family were living in the same house."³⁾

"Ingenious /

1) Anne Thackeray Ritchie's Introduction to *Ormond* by Maria Edgeworth, p.ix (London 1895)

2) *Ormond* - p.51. by Maria Edgeworth.

3) p.viii introduction to *Ormond*, by Maria Edgeworth.

"Ingenious and wonderful though King Corny seems to young Harry Ormond, he had heard accidentally the conversation of a few people of common sense besides the sly, witty and satirical remarks of Sir Ulick upon Cousin Cornelius, and it had occurred to Harry to question the utility and real grandeur of some of these things which had struck his childish imagination."¹⁾

Thus both Glenroy and King Corny are pitted against worldly, experienced men, but whereas the reader's sympathy is wholly with the warm-hearted Corny in his encounter with his cousin Sir Ulick, Susan Ferrier's audience must almost enjoy the discomfiture of the Chief, who never considered anyone, attempting to humour his taciturn kinsman Inch Orran. His motives are entirely selfish; he covets the Inch Orran property adjoining his own and hopes that a tidy fortune may be left to his son Norman. The scene is replete with a grim kind of humour; the sneers of Inch Orran are terrible, but the Chief, usually so thin-skinned, affects not to notice. His bribe of lavish hospitality only disgusts the frugal little laird, and the result of all his labours and stomaching of insults is a stern condemnation of waste and gormandising.

King Corny on the other hand, in Maria Edgeworth's own words, "was made according to the general standard of wit and acuteness, shrewd humour, and sarcasm of that class of unread natural geniuses, an over-match for Sir Ulick, who is of the more cultivated class of acute and roguish Irish gentlemen."²⁾

With /

1) Ormond, p. 51. by Maria Edgeworth.

2) p.viii. Introduction to Ormond, by Maria Edgeworth.

With delight, therefore, the reader follows every quick parry in their verbal duel, undertaken by King Corny on Harry Ormond's behalf. Having discovered Sir Ulick's intentions, King Corny clinches this brilliant dialogue characteristically with a word - "Wood cocked!"

Both men, Irish and Highland, have the Celtic weaknesses, love of excess in feasting and drinking, (with quick anger if guests cannot keep pace) love of bravery, - six-oared boats on the loch, streamers flying and pipers playing - love of absolute authority, but King Corny had also the Celtic virtues, which Glenroy lacked, a warm heart and fidelity to friends. There is much humour of the trenchant kind, in the portrait of Glenroy, but little of the fun that plays round the figure of lovable Corny of the tattered realm.

And so it is, with their deaths - the chief drags out a long and tiresome illness, exercising a petty tyranny in his dotage, "so that all that could be said of his death was, that he had merely ceased to be,"¹⁾ but King Corny dies while hunting, with that startling suddenness peculiar to all his actions in life.

After Glenroy's decease "a vast concourse assembled to pay the last honours to the might departed; and the Chief of Glenroy was consigned to the narrow house with all but royal pomp,"²⁾ while in the mansion of Corny, a rowdier mob gathered to mourn their beloved chief in their peculiar Irish way. "For three succeeding nights, Ormond saw the candles lighted, and smelt the smell of tobacco and whiskey, and heard the sound of many voices /

1) Destiny, Vol. 11. p. 147

2) Destiny, Vol 11. p. 150.

voices at the wake."

Another character common to *Destiny* and *Ormond* is the Frenchwoman confidant; in the former, Madame Latour, in the latter Mlle. O'Feley. It is striking that the characteristic common to those two figures, as well as to the study of Madame Duval, grandmother of Evelina, is vulgarity. Mlle. O'Feley is perhaps the most pleasant of the three, though her worldly influence on Dora, Cornys daughter is bad for that young woman. It is amusing to note that her vulgarity appears only when she drops her fine Parisian accent, "then her ideas, manner, air, voice, and gestures were Irish, she looked and moved a vulgar Irishwoman."¹⁾

Madame Latour is the least pleasing, for where Madame Duval is openly gross and vulgar, Madame Latour insults by innuendo. The situation is made the more piquant, as Edith is the unconscious rival of her lovely cousin Florinda, and under cover of French and pretended lack of English, Madame Latour feigns ignorance of Edith's engagement to Reginald, who, to do him justice, resents allusions to Edith's insipidity, as well as to the implied familiarity of the French intriguer.

The faithful old retainer is a type also sketched in *Destiny* and in *Ormond*. In the latter, she is merely outlined as the superstitious old Sheila, though the touches are kindly and sensitive, as when Sheila shuts the door to exclude the noise of the wake, which causes the Protestant Harry to shudder, and there is an intuition and delicacy too in her remarks and dealings with her superiors. The latter qualities she shares with
 * delightful /

1. *Ormond*, p. 89 by Maria Edgeworth.

delightful old Molly Macaulay of Destiny, who staunchly abides with Edith through all her trials, and when her fortunes are at their lowest ebb, shows no change in her attitude, save in the greater deference she pays to the chief's daughter. Her relations with Glenroy are nicely summed up in her own words:- "and I thought sometimes when I was away, 'Oh', thinks I to myself, 'I wonder what Glenroy will do for somebody to be angry with, for Benbowie's grown so deaf, poor creature, it's not worth while to be angry at him; and you're so gentle, that it would not do for him to be angry with you; but I'm sure he has a good right to be¹⁾ angry at me, considering how kind he has always been to me'"

Yet she is not abjectly servile to her chief, but even braving his wrath, ventures to reason with him, in his most unreasonable moments. On children especially, she lavishes her affection, and like Miss Betty Duguid is at the bidding of all her relatives. Her room at the castle was a "favourite rendezvous of the children who delighted in beating upon her old spinnet, and in being allowed to daub paper, dirty their fingers, and look at cloth-dogs, calico-peacocks, tinsel grottoes, filigree figures, birds made of real dyed feathers, and all the rest of Mrs Macaulay's monstrosities."²⁾ Yet with all her odd notions and superstitions, she is not a monstrosity herself, but almost the only eccentric of Miss Ferriers who is wholly pleasing - a merry little woman who sang old Scottish songs to herself³⁾ "in very blitheness of heart". To her, Miss Ferrier gives the honour of the last word in the book.

As /

1) Destiny Vol. 1., p.274

2) Destiny Vol. 1., p. 29

3) Destiny, Vol. 1. p. 28.

As Glenroy could only tolerate an admiring company, over whom he could exercise his conscious superiority, he chose for his other companion the somnolent Laird of Benbowie, "obtuse as a hedgehog"¹⁾. A few strokes were all that were needed: the Laird is perfectly presented - a drowsy acquiescence, a confirmative echo of his chief.

However, Glenroy acquired a real thorn in his flesh, in his Moderate Minister M'Dow. The great days of the enlightened Moderates were past, the days of the Evangelists were upon Scotland, but the chief, though vague on the subject, abhorred anything he thought was Evangelical, just as Corny hated Methodism "that was bad - and nonsense! - for man, woman, or beast."²⁾

Glenroy had wanted an accommodating Churchman, or perhaps even a convivial one, like Corny's Father Joss. As "the other heritors were few in number and the patronage in this instance was conceded to him,"³⁾ he chose the tutor in the family of the Laird of Kindullie, who was reputed "to mind his own affairs". "This last qualification he certainly possessed, as Glenroy soon found to his cost,"⁴⁾ for the large, loud-spoken, splay-footed man, preached badly, ate largely, and ever demanded his "owgmentations". His whole portrait is a brutal caricature of shrewd selfishness: his most unbearable trait being his terrible tactlessness. Miss Ferrier's is indeed a satire in this instance of the "bloody kind",⁵⁾ as Professor Saintsbury states. His wooing of Lucy Malcolm is such that she is unaware that it is taking place, for it largely consists /

1) Destiny. Vol. 1. p. 25.

2) Ormond. p. 68 by Maria Edgeworth.

3) Destiny Vol. 1. p. 32.

4) Destiny Vol. 1. p. 33.

5) Channels of English Literature - The English Novel - Susan Ferrier - Prof. Saintsbury.

consists in hints that he needs domestic help, and his offering consists of a "slight refreshment" in the way of cocky-leeky, fat ducks, collops and tripe as coarse and repulsive as the person of the host himself. When he does eventually secure a wife, she is a merchant's clumsy daughter. The description of their offspring Mysie, on their visit to the elegant Waldegrave establishment, is positively cruel in its unsparing accuracy:- "a coarse, blubber-lipped, sunburnt visage, with staring sea-green eyes and a quantity of rough sandy hair, and mulatto neck." - "The gloves were now taken off, and a pair of thick mulberry paws set at liberty."¹⁾

This description is reminiscent of Miss Becky's arms "strapped back by means of a pink ribbon of no ordinary strength or doubtful hue,"²⁾ though the humour has been replaced by an almost vicious tone. It is a Scottish type that Miss Ferrier is caricaturing in the M'Dow family, a type that she apparently loathed, rawboned and self-assured.

Jane Austen's, Mr Collins of "Pride and Prejudice" again a clergyman under patronage, was also absurd, mainly because of his exaggerated deference; there was no bold over-riding of a patron. Both clergymen are self-complacent to a degree, but where the pretensions of the one produce real comedy, those of the other arouse nothing but disgust. In fact /

1) Destiny Vol. 11. p. 306

2) Marriage, Vol. 1. p. 185.

fact, Miss Ferrier in the M'Dow caricature had set out to chastise with the valour of her tongue, an offensive boor masquerading as a minister. There is not one note of relief in the portrait; Miss Austen would never have permitted herself this over-emphasis.

Nevertheless, though a caricature, the Rev. M'Dow seems to have been recognized in contemporary Scotland. Mr. Blackwood in his correspondence suggests that there might have been such "Moderates", for he writes:- "The breed of these
1)
beasts is happily getting scarcer".

Miss Ferrier had the discretion not to publish anything after *Destiny* though she made several efforts to write, none of which pleased her. For her last novel she received, through Sir Walter Scott's aid, £1,700 from the publisher Cadell.

The models and the enjoyment of them had belonged to her earlier years; now the growing barrier of religious principle and moral opinion, so fatal to the spirit of comedy, was firmly erected between her and her talent.

1) Correspondence,) ed. by Doyle. p. 209.
of
Susan Ferrier.)

V

It is well to remember, when attempting to assess Miss Ferrier's art as a novelist, that critics nearer her own day, as those of the *Scottish Review* (Vol. 34, p.70) placed her "on a level with Miss Austen and considerably above Miss Burney."

Posterity would deny her equality with Miss Austen; she suffers greatly in comparison with the English writer, whom she resembles only as a good amateur handiworker does a master craftsman. Yet behind the art of both, was what G.K. Chesterton¹⁾ calls "the gigantic inspiration of laughter", but this laughter, the mature novelist subdued into irony and understatement. With Miss Ferrier, there was little of this restraint, or selection, hence many of her sketches lose the telling effect they would have had in Miss Austen's hands, by their profusion and sometimes by their irrelevancy. Even Jane Austen's²⁾ immature sketches show a "neatness in the nonsense;" her writing therefore has a smooth surface, and character and incident fit as in a mosaic; but Miss Ferrier's surface protrudes with oddities, with humps and excrescences. Whatever she wishes to include, goes into her story, whether it be a striking original or a moral dissertation or an extract from Chalmers' sermons, with no thought for fitness. This irregularity is increased by her /

1) G.K. Chesterton - Introduction to "Love and Friendship".

2) G.K. Chesterton - Introduction to "Love and Friendship".

her treatment of character, where amid some realistic figures, one may be toppled into farce. Mr Collins is Jane Austen's nearest approach to burlesque, but even he sinks back to a less conspicuous, more normal part after his marriage, and thus fits into the pattern.

There is then nothing to distract the reader in Jane Austen's novels from the contemplation of that little society whose life she mirrors. It is perhaps her supreme achievement, that as in few other works, the attention of the reader is focussed irresistibly on an art that has no adventitious aids.

However Miss Ferrier touches one deeper note than ever Jane Austen did; she dares to handle a situation verging on the tragic. In *Marriage* and in *The Inheritance*, Lady MacLaughlan and Uncle Adam are two creatures, by nature of generous affection and of great common sense, who become warped by circumstance into oddities; a conflict is ever present between their spontaneous good feelings and the suspicions and crotchets inured by experience, with the result that they are ashamed when surprised in benevolence, and are ever tormented by both sides of their nature at once.

For this portrayal of a kind of tragic conflict, and for the real Scottish gusto for these "particular" men and women, Susan Ferrier should live as a novelist. Though her work is uneven as compared with Miss Austen and though she lacks the cool temperament necessary for satire, there is great vitality in her writing by fits and starts, and a kind of noble candour, a /

a saeva indignatio in her severe strokes.

With Miss Burney, we have the English Comic Novel in the stage of evolution. She followed Tobias Smollett, whose novel had been richly grotesque and spicily flavoured as suited the times. Her task was to 'urbanize' the novel and yet maintain amusement, so that it is not surprising that her work was uneven. Moreover Smollett was a Scotsman, and Scotland was really the happy-hunting for the eccentrics that his novel tradition required. Miss Ferrier had started early on that chase, as her letters clearly show, and had too, the advantage of a candid critic in Miss Clavering, and of an intelligent society in Edinburgh. One has only to read the flattering prefaces, even from such great men as Edmund Burke, to realise that Fanny Burney did not enjoy the same benefit. Moreover, though her serious incidents are often melodramatic, Miss Ferrier's own good sense kept her from absurdities, such as those which disfigure "Cecilia". The result is, that despite the ups and downs of Susan Ferrier's novels, there is a much greater liveliness and realism in characterisation. Though the fashionable tone delightfully pervades Fanny Burney's novels, it neutralizes character, and the personages and their conversation are not easy to differentiate.

In workmanship too, Susan Ferrier's detail is more exact. Both Fanny Burney and Susan Ferrier loved a droll incident, but, for example, the guardian's emergence as a sweep at the Masquerade in "Cecilia" is not so irresistibly comic and well-told as Miss Pratt's emergence from the hearse in /

in "The Inheritance". In the latter novel too, Miss Ferrier had shown that she could construct a well-jointed story, where characters fit in appropriately, a feat which one feels was beyond Miss Burney's power.

Undoubtedly Miss Ferrier learned much of the "cits" language from Fanny Burney, and whenever her chief characters travel south, as they do in the three novels, they are plagued by their vulgar Cockney relatives, a humiliation the two authoresses loved to inflict on their fine heroes and heroines, so that it will be found that the Larkins and the Branghtons and the Ribleys all speak the same jargon; over Miss Bell Black's shoulder too, peeps the ogling, voluble Miss La~~rolles~~ *Larolles*.

The authoress then with whom Susan Ferrier can be most justly compared is her Irish contemporary Maria Edgeworth. Just as Miss Austen is a flight above her, and Miss Burney one below her, Maria Edgeworth and she are more on a level.

Both are didactic in purpose, but there is a difference here. Her father said of Maria:-

"It has therefore been my daughter's aim to promote by all her writings, the progress of education from the cradle to the grave."

Her early writings therefore were of and for children - she was quite naturally didactic, but Susan was very sarcastic about the Fashionable Tales:-

"It is time all 'good ladies' and 'grateful little girls' should be returned to their gilt boards, and as for sentimental /

sentimental weavers and moralising glovers, I recommend them as penny ware for the pedlar."¹⁾

However, they are both attacking the same foibles:-

"The great virtues, the great vices excite strong enthusiasm, vehement horror, but after all it is not so necessary²⁾ to warn the generality of mankind against the lesser faults."

Miss Ferrier's natural way of doing this was by unsparing satire, unmerciful humour; only when she felt obliged to moralize on the subject was she deserting her true vocation as "comedian of upper and middle class life, attacking alike pretentious folly and homely dullness."

In her presentation of national character however, Maria Edgeworth had several great advantages over Susan Ferrier. First of all, she was of English descent, settled in Ireland, and, just a little apart from the Irish race, could comment on them, ~~as~~ a native of Scotland like Susan Ferrier, living amidst all her characters and being one herself, could never have done.

Maria had also two elements in her nature which helped her to understand the Irish as a race. It was not without significance that Byron found Maria Edgeworth a "nice little unassuming Jeanie Deans looking body," while in her Scott saw "the Whippity Stourie" fairy of Scottish nurseries; that is, she was a blend of the practical and the whimsical.

She had, too, travelled far more widely than Susan Ferrier and had met a greater variety of people. Even at sixty-six /

1) Memoir and Correspondence - S. Ferrier, p. 65.

2) Maria Edgeworth's Collected Letters, p. 245.

sixty-six, she was hazarding the sloughs of Connemara, delighted to see "perfectly new characters and modes of living". Ireland then was a mirror to her, in which she saw infinite varieties of lights and shades. Thus, without explicit moral her tale, *Castle Rackrent* is a revelation of Irish character, but in her Irish novels - *The Absentee* and *Ormond*, apart from the brilliant interplay of characters, Lord Colambre is a prig, schooling his parents, and Ormond becomes reformed from a wayward, lovable youth into a well-regulated system of behaviour.

But the Irish peasant has Miss Edgeworth's heart as no Scottish peasant ever has Miss Ferriers.

"Thy wit too quick, still blundering into sense
 Thy reckless humour, sad improvidence,
 And even what sober judges follies call
 I, looking at the Heart, forget them all."

The fun and spirit of this amazing lady goes on to the end, while Susan Ferrier passes her last dim strained years in sadness, though anxiously visited by distinguished friends. In her own personality, in her fearless and sincere criticisms of the foibles of her countrymen, Susan Ferrier herself represents the best of a passing society, that had sustained a Mrs Violet MacShake and an Uncle Adam in its midst.

CHAPTER IV

John Gibson Lockhart.

- I "Adam Blair"; "Matthew Wald" - peculiar novels dealing with the remorse of sinners: forerunners of new genre in literature.
- II Lockhart's early ambition to depict Presbyterian clergy humorously. Later drawn to a serious study of same. Son of the manse: descendant of Covenanters. Early training in Glasgow threw him in way of Evangelical revival. Influence of Whitefield and Wesley in Scotland: warm reception in West. Other influences on Lockhart; visit to Goethe: bond of interest in German studies with Sir Walter Scott. Lockhart's mocking satire in Blackwood's Magazine as in Chaldees Ms. "Peter's Letters to His Kinsman" vivid picture of Edinburgh Society Valerius - Roman novel - his first fiction: prototype of the novel on classic theme.
- III "Adam Blair". Interest in concept of evil: theological tradition of Scotland. Lockhart's real reverence for "Auld Kirk". "Adam Blair" founded on anecdote related by his father. Published by Blackwood. Account of the plot of "Adam Blair". Unity of action. Little relief from conflict /

conflict between passion and religion. The wood in Adam Blair - place of evil. cf. John Buchan's "Witch Wood". Analysis of Adam Blair's mind-most interesting feature. Character of Charlotte the enchantress. Comparison of "Adam Blair" with Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter"; with "La Nouvelle Heloise" and "Werther" in theme. Scots worthies in "Adam Blair".

IV "Matthew Wald" - In interval Lockhart wrote "Reginald Dalton"- novel of university days. "Matthew Wald" appeared in 1824: domestic tragedies of Lockhart help to account for its atmosphere of gloom. Account of its plot. Contemporary praise: Scott's dislike of the book. Psychological power. Lockhart's treatment of the Methodist revival referred to in Matthew Wald: comparison with treatment by eighteenth century writers. Lockhart's novels - flashes of his genius.

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART. (1794-1854)

Some Passages in the Life of Mr. Adam Blair.
Minister of the Gospel at Cross-Meikle, 1822.

The History of Matthew Wald, 1824.

I.

There are three works of fiction, two by John Gibson Lockhart and one by James Hogg, which hold a peculiar place among the small Scots Novels by the early nineteenth century. They are "Some Passages in the Life of Mr. Adam Blair", "The History of Matthew Wald", and Hogg's "The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner". In each one of these books, the theme is strangely repellant - the fearful remorse of sinners, which the writers work out with originality and power. "Bold, powerful and original production",¹⁾ for instance, is the comment of the contemporary reviewer of Adam Blair. "Original" because although Lockhart and Hogg were writing when the Scotch or Waverley novels were at the height of their popularity, those three Scottish books owe nothing to the /

1) p. 353, Blackwood, Vol XI, March 1822.

the influence of Scott, to whom the subjects in any case would be "disagreeable"; ¹⁾ "powerful" because they deal with passions and conflicts deeply rooted in the spiritual life of Scotland.

Those three novels stand apart then in that literary epoch, and instead of looking to the past, are the forerunners of a new genre in English and in Scottish literature, the psychological analysis of character, often of abnormal character. Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*, Wm. Sharpe's tale of the Sin-Eater, Mary Weeb's "Precious Bane" dwell on similar themes, while R.L. Stevenson's "Thrawn Janet", George Douglas Brown's "House with the Green Shutters" and Dr. Cronin's "Hatter's Castle" are in the direct line, for their almost morbid power and intensity.

II

Adam Blair.

As far back as 1814, John Gibson Lockhart the author-to-be of Adam Blair had been contemplating a novel on Scottish character, chiefly concerned with the character of the clergy; but it was to be a book of "humours" based on observation. "I mean it chiefly as a receptacle of an immense quantity of anecdotes and observations I have made concerning /

1) Scott to Lady Abercorn, p. 346 - Andrew Lang's *Life of Lockhart* (on Matthew Wald)

concerning the state of the Scotch, chiefly their clergy and elders. It is to me wonderful how the Scotch character has been neglected. I suppose the kirk stood low in Smollett's early days and he had imbibed a disgust for it. He has given us you see only a few little sketches, nothing full or rich like his seamen"¹⁾.

The reference to Smollett is significant; the eccentricities of the Scots Presbyterians, tickled Lockhart's youthful fancies and he collected specimens of Presbyterian eloquence, both for the amusement of his friend Christie and for insertion into a novel that would have anticipated Galt's Ayrshire Legatees. "His hero was John Todd, a 'True Blue' in London during the visit of the Emperor of Russia, The Romance of the Thistle was the name he thought of"²⁾. However the youthful author read Waverley before his own work was completed and decided to let the novel "sleep a year or two"³⁾.

It is interesting to note that as Andrew Lang says, "in the matter of novel-writing, Lockhart's ambition at the age of twenty was to be what Galt became, the recorder of the Caledonian humours of his own not of past romantic ages and of 'rampageous antiquity' as Galt's Provost says"⁴⁾.

No one knows what became of the Todd Ms, but Lockhart's idea for a novel of national manners was proof of that independence that /

1) Andrew Lang, The Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart, p. 72.

2) The Life and Letters of J.G. Lockhart, A. Lang - p. 72.

3) The Life and Letters of J.G. Lockhart, A. Lang - p. 74.

4) The Life and Letters of J.G. Lockhart, A. Lang - p. 75.

that was to characterize his later work. In eight years, his attitude to the subject of the Scottish clergy and people was to undergo a startling change. By that time, (1822) Galt had published his "Annals of the Parish," and perhaps Lockhart realized that Galt's peculiar approach to the subject and the character of the Rev. Micah Balwhidder was inimitable and that Galt was the master of that particular vein of humour. At any rate, "the repenting stool" at which Lockhart had jested in his earlier days, took on a new and sombre significance in his own analysis of Presbyterian character in the person of the Rev. Adam Blair, Minister of the Gospel at Cross-Meikle.

There were, however, elements in Lockhart's character which contributed to a serious treatment of the subject. Andrew Lang describes Lockhart "as a child though a strange one of the Covenanters (whose peculiarities were precisely those of the Methodists); as the son and the brother of orthodox ministers; "an unmenseful bairn of the Manse" as an admirer,¹⁾ were it but a sentimental admirer of the kirk and her exercises". Thus by descent and family connections, he might be drawn to contemplate the manners and traditions of the Church of Scotland. Of Lockhart's father, Lang says, "he was, as the old gentleman's letters reveal him a serious rather narrow divine of the old Presbyterian school. He could tell a story well and on a story of a real set of incidents told by him, Lockhart founded his best novel, Adam Blair".²⁾

Lockhart's /

1) The Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart, p. 180, by Andrew Lang.

2) The Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart, p. 13, by Andrew Lang.

Lockhart's early training and habitation in Glasgow threw him also in the way of the evangelical movement that swept Scotland at the beginning of the nineteenth century, "swamped stagnant moderation and left as deposit a revival of religious zeal and earnestness, in kind with sterner theological tone, which partly for good, partly for evil - renewed the traditional religious character of Scotland"¹⁾.

In the previous century, Whitefield's Calvinistic evangelicalism had found a ready hearing in Scotland, culminating in the famous Cambuslang Revival of 1742. The language of fervour was once more heard in Scotland.

"The religious life of the country had been quickened by the preaching of the Covenanting ministers on the moors and hillsides, and when Whitefield adopted it, he was in the line of mighty associations and quenchless memories"²⁾.

The indomitable preacher paid fourteen visits to the north and raised his open pulpit in the Orphan Hospital Park in Edinburgh, or in the High Churchyard at Glasgow. All classes gathered round him, not least in importance the students at both universities. "I would fain die preaching"³⁾ Whitefield declared.

All Scotland, but particularly the west, was aglow with the message of the great missionary, and a Church of Scotland minister, Dr. Gillies, wrote a biography of Whitefield in /

1) Social Life of Scotland in the 18th Century, Henry G. Graham, p. 365.

2) Wesley and Whitefield in Scotland, Rev. D. Butler, p. 19.

3) Whitefield Works, V. iii, p. 311.

in 1772. This same man welcomed Whitefield's successor, John Wesley, to Glasgow.

Though Wesley was no Calvinistic preacher like Whitefield, and therefore never quite in tune with the theological temper of Scotland, his influence became a spiritual force within the church, and among the lives of the masses. Again, he found a more favourable reception in the west. Writing of Glasgow in his journal, Wesley says:-
 "Has not God still a favour for this city? It was long eminent for serious religion. And He is able to repair what is now decayed and to build up the waste places".

Wesley carried his doctrine of repentance, faith, holiness, all over Scotland even to Aberdeen and Inverness on the twenty-two visits he made, and although he often found the people dour, self-righteous and bigoted, yet "during the long period when Wesley received opposition of the most dis-
 :creditable kind in England and Ireland and Wales, he was everywhere received in Scotland with a dignity and a courtesy which were due to him as a Christian gentleman and scholar and teacher. He was received always with respect, and his re-
 :ception speaks much for the civilisation of the people as well
 1)
 as for their perception". Historically, the west of Scotland has been the home of great religious movements; from there the fine old Celtic Church spread its influence; it was the sanctuary /

1) Butler, Wesley and Whitefield in Scotland, p. 111.

sanctuary of the fervid Covenanting folk and the Whigamore sympathisers; to its ardent people, Wesley's message did not come in vain. Perhaps the temperament of its people is due to their Celtic Irish ancestry - the Scots of Dalriada; the Brythons of Strathclyde; perhaps to the milder climate. Evangelical tradition at any rate, was strong in the West, and as Lockhart was educated at Glasgow University first of all, and returned to Glasgow after his sojourn at Oxford, being a man of acute perception, he could not fail to appreciate the religious tone of that time.

There were other influences at work in Lockhart's life. During those formative years 1814-22, he plunged himself into an extraordinary variety of literary adventures, one of which led him to visit Germany, where at Weimar, he met the great German Goethe, and his attention was turned towards German literature. In 1774 Goethe had written 'Die Leiden des jungen Werther,' an example of the confessional literature, in vogue on the continent, of which Rousseau's 'Confessions' and 'La Nouvelle Héloïse' were French contributions. It is interesting to note that John Galt, writing to Wm. Blackwood, 14th March 1822, actually suggests that Adam Blair, though inferior, belongs to the class of Werther and Héloïse.

This visit to Goethe too was a bond between Lockhart and Scott in their first meeting in 1818 because of their interest in German studies. About this time, Lockhart consented to translate for Blackwood, Schlegel's lectures on the history of literature and became a regular contributor to the famous Magazine, making himself hated and feared as a critic. That side of Lockhart's nature that inclined towards

mockery of all kinds and towards literary practical jokes, had full outlet in the many articles in *Maga*, for which he was responsible, under now one, now another pseudonym - chiefly in the ebullient *Chaldee Ms.* where, with Hogg, Christopher North and others, he satirised to his heart's content, friends and foes in contemporary Edinburgh society.

In 1819, came Peter's letters to his Kinsfolk (Vols. I and II), wherein Lockhart, as a Welsh physician, Dr. Morris gave a vivid, and on the whole, fair picture of Edinburgh society and the brilliant figures it contained. "Valerius" was his first serious attempt at fiction, a Roman tale of the Christian era in the time of Trajan. It is a cold, formal work and reads, as Andrew Lang suggests, very much like a correct translation from Latin,¹⁾ with accurate contemporary detail dragged into it. Its interest to modern readers lies in the fact that it is the prototype of modern efforts at the novel of classical times. Lockhart had the most elastic mind and boundless intellectual vigour. He shows in the literary sphere what Galt had in commerce - fertility in ideas and projects. As a pioneer in the Roman novel, Lockhart with his *Valerius*, though it lacks a natural tone, and was denied many of the sources that enriched later works, is a worthy leader to such books as Moore's "Epicurean"; Horace Smith's "Zillah"; Croly's "Salathiel"; Bulmer Lytton's "Last Days of Pompeii"; and best of all, Robert Graves's masterpieces - "I Claudius"; and "Claudius the God and his wife Messalina." In chronological order too, *Valerius* preceded "Quo Vadis," the remarkable Roman novel by the Polish author Henryk Sienkiewicz.

On the fate of "Valerius", the author speaks like one of his Stoic philosophers. "The book is damned"¹⁾, he wrote years afterwards to Christie, but it had served its purpose and had given him an apprenticeship in the art of the novel.

III

His next effort in fiction was to have a different destiny. A man of his temperament, brilliantly gay or deeply melancholic, was naturally attracted to the depicting of powerful passions. It is significant that like Matthew Arnold, Lockhart rated Byron and Wordsworth as the greatest poets of the day. Of all the Romantics, these two particularly showed in their work a consciousness of the positive power of evil and Lockhart was quick to appreciate this. In commenting on Lara, he wrote of Conrad:- "Upon my honour, I think it shows more depth of insight into human nature to invent such a terrible band of ideas all so fitted to this gloomy sort of being, than ever poet surpassed"²⁾. And where would Lockhart find this concept of evil so concretely apprehended as in the theological tradition of the Church of Scotland, where wrestling with Satan was a real, even a common experience among the zealous.

On /

1) W.I.p.290 - A. Lang, The Life and Letters of J. Gibson Lockhart.

2) Vol. I. p. 71 - A. Lang, The Life and Letters of J. Gibson Lockhart.

On the higher side too, as Lang has noted, Lockhart had a real reverence for "the auld kirk". "In all his works from 'Peter's Letters' to the 'Life of Burns' and thence to the Quarterly articles and great Biography, Lockhart shows how unaffectedly he was impressed by the high bare austere¹⁾ and heartfelt devotion of the old Scottish style". Thus it was perhaps natural or inevitable for him to turn to such a subject as - "Some Passages in the Life of Mr. Adam Blair, Minister of the Gospel at Cross-Meikle".

In February 1822, Lockhart writing to his brother Lawrence, mentions the completion of his book. "By the bye, you must know that I have, since I was with you, converted a story the doctor told us after dinner one day, into a very elegant little volume under the name of "Some Passages in the Life of Mr. Adam Blair". You will receive a copy one of these days. I am afraid the doctor may disapprove of some things; so take care you warn him to hold his tongue, i.e. in case he suspects me (which he will do) I took it to Ebony when it was done and he thought so highly of it that he offered me £300 at present, and £200 more on the second edition for the copyright. This I accepted modestly".

Probably Lockhart did not expect that great fame would accrue to him as a novelist. His very resilience of mind was against him. Writing of Lockhart, Lady Eastlake comments on the range of literary forms he attempted. "It is seldom one sees so genuine a literary character - so universal in /

1) Lang:- Life and Letters of J. Gibson Lockhart, p. 297.

in one, for his reading and observation have been too widely general his literary pursuits too diffused, for him to bear the stamp of the poet, the classic, the antiquarian or the historian. He is everything but the man of science¹⁾.

Nevertheless he had some of the gifts of a novelist, including the ability to tell a story sufficiently interesting to excite the curiosity of the reader, not only to ponder over the character of the protagonist Adam Blair, but over the enigmatical character of his author to whom such a study of gloom and passion should appeal.

The "Advertisement" of Adam Blair echoes Lockhart's own half-ironic description of the "elegant little volume" - "a very elegant and amusing romance not unlikely to become the Scottish Vicar of Wakefield". This strikes the modern reader as a curiously inappropriate ticket with which to label, Adam Blair. A more likely comparison exists between the simple Micah Balwhidder of Galt's, *Annals of the Parish* and Goldsmith's *Vicar*, than between the tortured minister of Cross-Meikle and the placid incumbent of Wakefield.

Adam Blair is a tale of a young and handsome Scots minister who loses his dearly loved wife prematurely. At her death his faith is sorely shaken, but after a struggle, he resumes his normal course of life, even going through the gruesome Scots rites of "chesting" and burial with a calm that astonishes / (7)

1) Dr. Mitchell - Note Book - 13. N.L.S. - Elwin Correspondence. Journal of Lady Eastlake, p. 113.

astonishes and moves his parishioners, particularly his favourite elder John Maxwell, to veneration. "The knots, the ribbons, the cushions, the satin, the tinsel - all that melancholy, glitter turned his soul sick within him. Sadness weariness, heart-sickness - these were now his visitants. He stood pale and feeble, while the tears flowed over his cheeks in utter silence",¹⁾ but on the next day, "Mr. Blair stood in the midst of the apartment with a face of such calmness and composure as if he had been the only man there that day whose business it was not to receive comfort, but to give it".²⁾

After the funeral, the congregation lingered in the churchyard to gaze on the newly-made grave where "the dead mother had been laid down by the side of her dead children"; and to point to the marble tablet recording "the pious labours of Mr. Blair's father".³⁾ Nearby was a green headstone, rudely fashioned, "to which their fingers were pointed with feeling of yet loftier veneration." Here lay the grandfather of their minister, "who had fought against bloody Clavers and the butcher Dalryell, at Bothwell bridge and endured torture, without shrinking, in the presence of false Lauderdale". "They who are acquainted with Scotland - above all, with the west of Scotland - cannot be ignorant of the reverence which is still cherished for the seed of the martyrs".⁴⁾

With /

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- 1) Adam Blair, p. 19, published - Wm. Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1822.
 - 2) Adam Blair, p. 21.
 - 3) Adam Blair, p. 23.
 - 4) Adam Blair, p. 24.

With his little daughter Sara, aged eight, his only surviving child of a family of four, he lived the life of a recluse all that winter at Cross-Meikle, the long dark months being enlivened only rarely by visits to or from the hospitable old lady of Semplehaugh and a neighbouring crusty but kindly old minister, Dr. Muir, whom Adam Blair had somewhat offended by his diffidence in responding to his well-meant offers of sympathy.

When Mrs. Semple returned to Edinburgh after New Year, a deep melancholy settled down on Adam Blair, of so enervating a nature, that old John Maxwell in anxiety, wrote to Mrs. Semple to acquaint her with this sad state of affairs. "To write a letter - above all, to write a letter to Lady Semplehaugh, was a matter of no trivial importance with such a man as John Maxwell, therefore, one whole morning was set apart for the concocting of it".¹⁾

A week later a large box arrived from Edinburgh, containing various presents of papers and cloth and two letters - one from Mrs. Semple, the other from one Charlotte Campbell, a cousin and girlhood friend of Mrs. Blair, suggesting that she might spend some six or seven weeks at Cross Meikle, before taking up residence for the summer with the lady at Semplehaugh.

This Charlotte Campbell, daughter of a wealthy W.S. had eloped with a very young Englishman, Beauchamp Arden, who subsequently deserted her. In the intervening months before her divorce, it is suggested that she lived the life of an adventuress/

1) Adam Blair - p. 29.

adventuress, and then, having won her suit at the Commissary Court, that "demi-reverent judicature", "Charlotte was forthwith announced in the Caledonian Mercury, as having bestowed her fair hand upon one of that numerous division of the human species which may be shortly and accurately described as answering to the name of Captain Campbell".¹⁾ There is a spirit of raillery about this passage, and Lockhart is waggish on the subject of the Highland gentleman, who had, of course begun the world with a pair of bare legs and ten guineas, and had reached his zenith with a tidy West Indies fortune "and if the possession of several thousand pounds entitles a military man to style himself Captain, there is every reason to believe that his proper designation, as well as his usual one, was Captain Campbell".²⁾

Lockhart takes great care to depict Charlotte's Highlander in an unromantic light. In his attitude, he resembles Susan Ferrier; both look with a humorous eye on the picture of the feudal Highland chieftain emerging into the age of industrialism.

Soon tired of their bare and uncomfortable abode on Loch Fine, the Campbells rejoined the army in Holland, and after four years of the life there, Charlotte again made her appearance in Scotland, asseverating that she had come to make ready her Highland home for Captain Campbell who would join her in a few months.

It /

1) Adam Blair, p. 71.

2) Adam Blair, p. 72.

It was at this stage of her career that she descended upon the Manse of Cross Meikle in the Spring of the year. At first, her advent brought cheerfulness and mirth and great delight for little Sara. Her relationship with Adam Blair almost insensibly ripened after that night when he had found her weeping over the tomb of his wife in the moonlight. Shortly after this incident too, during a visit to Semplehaugh, Charlotte rescued Adam and little Sara from drowning. Though this adventure, with the almost hysterical reaction of the minister, sounds rather forced, it quickens the speed of the narrative, for, on their return to Cross-Meikle, Charlotte and Adam both sense a new feeling creeping into their brotherly and sisterly friendship.

On the very next morning, a sinister visitor, one Duncan Strahan, makes his appearance. He is a risen W.S. who is acting on behalf of Campbell of Uigness. Whatever his business with Charlotte might be, it causes her to pack up and leave Cross Meikle manse at once in company with the W.S., much to the dismay of Sara and of Adam Blair. The latter, tortured with all kinds of doubts arising from an ugly hint thrown to him by Duncan Strahan and strengthened by a suggestion from Dr. Muir, that rumours were spreading round the countryside, waited only until night came to set off on a wild ride to Greenock, where he hired a wherry to carry him to Lochfine.

In /

In his description of the sail from Greenock to Uigness, Lockhart allows himself to recall some of the romance of the past in the boatmen's song, "the small bark was soon dancing gaily over the green and shining billows, while the helmsman began to chaunt in a hoarse deep voice, one of those rude ancestral ditties with which the strenuous boatmen of the Gail are accustomed to sooth the Genius of the Deep. The young mariners joined in the chorus, and every slender plank in the bounding wherry seemed to quiver like human pulses¹⁾ beneath the stirring music of their Echinafoam".

As they neared the bank, all were startled by a loud laugh from a horseman on the brink of the rocks some yards away. With another and louder laugh, he galloped off.

Soon Adam landed on the desolate shore and made his way to the tower of Uigness, habitation of the Campbells, where he found Charlotte, the only tenant. The moonlight glinted on the naked sword she had drawn to defend herself against Duncan Straham, whose loud malicious laugh had startled the rowers. In that tower, Adam Blair spent the night listening to Charlotte's story of her insults. "Had she never told that story, perhaps²⁾ Adam Blair had never been a fallen man".

On the next morning appalled by his guilt, Adam flees from Uigness and among the lonely hills beyond, contemplates hurling himself into a deep tarn. From this he is /

1) Adam Blair, p. 209.

2) Adam Blair, p. 121.

is dragged off by Charlotte whom he spurns. He darts off by a hill path and after dreadful hesitation, Charlotte follows. The night's events, his mental torture and sense of abysmal sin before God bring on him a fierce fever. Charlotte traces his steps to a rude hut; she directs the inmates to bear him on a litter back to the tower, where for many weary days, she tends him, even through delirium, when he reviles her.

At length, enfeebled and prostrate from the fever, Adam Blair awakens to consciousness to find old John Maxwell by his bed. From him, Adam learns that strains of music that he seemed to have heard in his fever, wafted to him over the loch, were coronachs accompanying to its last resting place, the body of Charlotte Campbell, who had succumbed to the same fever that had smitten Adam Blair. A terrible remorse almost overcomes the minister; however he masters it before John Maxwell and soon has sufficiently recovered to rise and walk along the shores of the loch. There he meets with Captain Campbell, of all men, who had returned in violent passion to Uigness to catch his guilty wife, rumours of whose conduct had reached his ears, only to find her stretched out dead. Shock, added to the favourable reports he had heard of Adam Blair's character, even from the crude Duncan Strahan, compel Campbell to behave as a gentleman. Before Adam Blair can speak in his painful confusion, Captain Campbell, as he thinks, sets/

sets the young man's heart at rest by telling him, he will take no action against him and charges him to overmaster his emotion before John Maxwell, "The grave has swallowed up all my resentment I hope you have not had so near a look of it for nothing"¹⁾, he rides off.

After this painful encounter, Adam Blair acts with strange calm and determination.

"Little did John Maxwell - little did Captain Campbell suspect what were the secret workings of Adam Blair's mind, during the last night he spent in the tower of Uigness."²⁾ Next day, the young minister, his hair now turned grey with his experiences, and the old white-headed elder embark for Greenock and then for Glasgow where they arrive on Presbytery day.

At the inn at which they put up, Adam notices "a chilliness over the whole surface"³⁾ of the landlady's "civility". as she remarks on "the awful shake" Mr. Blair had evidently sustained in the Highlands. The landlord draws old Maxwell aside and from their whispered consultation, the elder returns to the waiting Adam Blair. "When he did so, there was a burning spot on each of his old cheeks and his lips were white as marble"⁴⁾. Adam notices nothing at the time, but later observes as they traverse the spacious churchyard of the cathedral, many beadles and church officers staring at him.

The Presbytery then held their meetings in the ancient Chapter House, with the Lady Chapel as an anteroom. When /

1) Adam Blair, p. 288.

2) Adam Blair, p. 290.

3) Adam Blair, p. 295.

4) Adam Blair, p. 295.

When Adam Blair appeared there, confusion arose to a pitch among the ecclesiastical attendants, one of whom at the very entrance of the Chapter House whispered urgently to Adam Blair.

"I know it well", was Adam Blair's answer - and the words were uttered in a voice perfectly calm as well as distinct - "I know it well; for that very cause am I here. Do you open the door for me"¹⁾.

Meanwhile within, the matter of Adam Blair's indiscretions was being debated as the scandal "had already amounted to what, in the ecclesiastical phraseology of Scotland goes under the name of a 'Fama Clamosa'".²⁾ Adam Blair's old friend, Dr. Muir the Moderator, left his chair to defend his young friend, saying that his conduct should not be judged in his absence, and that he had from "Mr. Blair on the night before he left Cross Meikle a solemn denial of the alleged guilt".

Even the coldest were moved by "the visible emotion of a man who generally controlled and concealed his more ardent feelings"³⁾. Unnoticed, at this moment, Adam Blair entered and walked through the room until he was a few paces from Dr. Muir, who, after a start, "resuming all the fervour of his tone, said these words - 'I thank God! - Adam Blair, speak, look up, let them hear your voice. Speak solemnly in the hearing of God and your brethren - Adam, are you guilty or not guilty of this un-:cleanness?'"⁴⁾.

The /

1) Adam Blair, p. 298.

2) Adam Blair, p. 300.

3) Adam Blair, p. 304.

The unhappy Blair, laying his hand upon his breast answered quickly and clearly, "Call me no more your brother - I am a fallen man - I am guilty".

Every pulse shook beneath the tone of that voice - but Dr. Muir groaned aloud, ere he made answer. "Fallen indeed Adam Blair - woe is me - doubly, trebly fallen! Do you remember the words you said to me when I spoke with you in private?"

"I do - and they were true. Then I deceived not you, but myself. Now, no one is deceived".

At his broken appeal, all are moved - "Pray for me - I dare not pray for myself. The God that hath abandoned me¹⁾ will hear your prayers".

All are struck with pity at his altered looks, but he reminds them - "Body and mind have been shaken but it is not as you would too kindly persuade yourselves". He then, declaring he will go back to the lot of his peasant ancestors, requests once more their prayer.

"Dr. Muir, still erect in front of Blair, surveyed them all round and round; and then saying 'Brethern, I read your thoughts' fell down upon his knees. They all knelt at the same moment, and Blair, weeping like an infant, knelt near²⁾ in the midst of them and stopped his forehead to the dust."

Some /

1) Adam Blair, p. 306.

2) Adam Blair, p. 309.

Some time after this, Adam Blair does what is most difficult of all, returns, the degraded minister, to his own parish of Cross Meikle, not to the manse but to a humble cottage, belonging to his grandfather. This had been prepared by Dr. Muir, and the garden stealthily retrieved from weeds by the Maxwell family. Little Sara returned from Semplehaugh to her father and Adam Blair resumed the lot of a peasant farmer, among his own people who were profoundly shocked and moved by their minister's tragedy.

Thus the years passed while Sara Blair grew into lovely womanhood under the care of her father.

One beautiful spring morning, Adam Blair was summoned to the deathbed of Dr. Muir. With him was old Mrs. Semple. Together they tried to persuade Adam Blair to undertake Dr. Muir's ministry.

"Adam Blair, I shall not see yon sun go down. I would fain leave my people in your hands"¹⁾. However Adam Blair resists his entreaty, and after closing the eyes of the dead old man, leaves the house.

He laid old Dr. Muir in the grave amid a vast assembly of gentry and people. That same evening, the clergyman who had attended the funeral, visited Adam Blair in his cottage and asked him to return to his old charge, while Mr. Jamieson, Adam Blair's successor at Cross-Meikle would take up Dr. Muir's work.

"Will /

1) Adam Blair, p. 330.

"Will you once more set your hand to God's work here at Cross Meikle?"

While Adam stood silent, old John Maxwell, now bed-ridden, was borne into their midst and added his supplication on behalf of the elders:-

"Oh sir, fear not! we have all witnessed the purification! let me not die until I have seen you once more in your father's place".¹⁾

And thus Adam Blair entered into his own again.

One characteristic of this novel which undoubtedly helps to give it power, is its unity of action; there is little relief, comic or otherwise, from the almost unbearable theme. "The entire interest of his work" is - "the display of passion in one obscure individual. He keeps close to his subject and feels his power over it".²⁾ This definition of the reviewer however, rather obscures the main element - the conflict between passion and religion. Twice is the faith of Adam Blair tested; in the first instance, after his wife's death, he wavers and then regains his beliefs and hopes. Especially is he aided by the Sunday sermon. "In spite of himself, the sight of the Christian congregation stimulated his spirit; the sound of their simple psalmody sent a trumpet to his heart; and when he rose to lead the prayers of his people, the ancient fervour of his devout and affectionate soul kindled the whole man, and shone out clearly once more from amidst the weary mists in which they had been smothered and obscured".³⁾

On /

1) Adam Blair, p. 335.

2) Blackwood - Vol. XI, March 1822, p. 349.

On the second occasion, he falls to temptation, in the person of the lovely Charlotte.

At both crises, Blair's surroundings are in harmony with this tumult of his mind. The first time, Adam has just fled in horror from his dead wife's room through the fields to the thick grove of pines behind the Manse. "There he rushed, he knew not whither, on and on between those naked brown trunks, till he was in the heart of the wood; there at last he tossed himself down on his back among the withered fern leaves and mouldering fir cones. Here everything accorded with the gloom of a sick and shuddering soul and he lay in a sort of savage stupor half-exulting as the wind moaned and sighed through the darkness about him".¹⁾

In that blackwood, Adam Blair was no longer the calm, the revered minister whom his parishioners knew, but a man distraught with "long-restrained long-vanquished passions" that had taken cover in the dark places of his soul. His cry to God had been a shriek not a prayer. The sepulchral gloom around was attuned to the mood of conflict. Here he wrestled with the Devil; the first great test of his faith which all but deserted him.

There is something peculiarly Scottish about that pine wood, the scene of Adam Blair's desolation. In Scottish literature, particularly of the Celtic variety, places are often charged with an emotional quality, John Buchan has touched on this strain in his Witch Wood, a place like Adam Blair's retrent /

1) Adam Blair, p. 47.

retreat, full of the sense of evil. Mary Webb tells the same tale in 'Precious Bane' of a soil where "the soft dimpling lands of England melt into the gaunt purple steep^s of the celtic Wales; a soil that was baneful to its owner Gideon Sam and through his greed for it, made him accursed. In the "Sin-Eater" too, that tale of horror by William Sharpe, to whom Mary Webb in her preface to Precious Bane acknowledges her debt. The sea, "that boils around the naked melancholy isles of farthest Thule" received 'the sins of the dead man only to change them into demons of the air that would harry the flying soul till
 1)
 Judgment Day".

There is but a touch of this in Lockhart's novel Adam Blair, but it is a powerful and effective one and is echoed on the second occasion of his great temptation. After the boatmen have landed him on the coast of Uigness,

"Blair sat down on one of the large fragments of grey rock which lay tumbled on the beach as if they had lain there ever since they had been shattered from the brow of the impending rock by some primeval convulsion of nature",²⁾ and in the desolation around him with the stark tower of Uigness casting its shadow on the moonlit heath, Adam Blair's mind is full of hesitation and foreboding.

Later "the wind rose higher and higher, and the roaring waves lashed far up against the black rocks of Uigness, and the wild /

1) p. 36, The Sin Eater, by Fiona MacLeod. (William Sharpe)

2) Adam Blair, p. 215.

wild voice of the tempest howled deeper and deeper along the forest ridges, and over the waste moors. They heard not the uproar of the elements, or if they did, it accorded but too well with the tumults of sense and passion throughout that long dark night".¹⁾

It is interesting to notice that the last quoted paragraph and a few others describing the discovery of the lovers by an old Highland crone, are omitted in the second edition of Adam Blair (printed 1824).

This omission is no doubt done in deference to the taste of the time. The contemporary reviewer in Blackwood champions the cause of Lockhart:- "the author writes of human nature which he well understands and his book will offend neither the truly moral nor the truly religious; but on the contrary, its whole ruling spirit is consonant with the purest morality and the highest religion."²⁾

Lockhart himself says:- "If it is immoral, I did not write it with an immoral intention, or in a culpable spirit but quite the reverse. The story is a true and I think a tragic and moral one, and old Henry MacKenzie on one side and Sir H. Moncrieff on the other, laud it highly. The former has sent Ebony a review of it, which I hope he will insert. No new romance and drama can escape the old boy".³⁾

For /

1) Adam Blair, p. 222.

2) Blackwood, V. XI, p. 350.

3) March 20th, 1822 - letter to Christie.

For the modern reader too, the interest of the book does not lie in the description of guilty passion, but in the workings of Adam Blair's mind. After that night of tumult it is to the desolation of the hills that Adam Blair flees, a stricken creature, gone to earth, and there again by the melancholy tarn, is oppressed by devils of torment. "Black loathsome creatures seemed to sit close beside him on either hand, polluting the breath ere it reached his nostrils, scowling upon him, with faces of devilish glee pawing upon his head, with hot talons, fanning his temples with wiry pinions, which stirred the air, but lent it no coolness. Wide glaring eyes¹⁾ fastened upon him, and held him fixed as their prey". Remorse to his fevered senses, had taken the concrete form of devils, who came in a wilderness. The melancholy tarn "formed where the hills descend into the bosom of the earth together", with its sea-mews and tempests and unfathomable blackness accentuated his loneliness. It is like the pit of Acheron or the featureless realm in hell in Paradise lost.

Apart from those passages, where Nature takes on the gloomy colouring of the man's reflections, Lockhart has shown his quality elsewhere as a descriptive writer. There is that scene of dramatic contrast at Adam Blair's wife's death. The bereaved minister has flung open the shutters to gaze on a splendid September evening of brilliant colouring, such as occurs in the West Country. "The sun had just sunk behind the /

1) Adam Blair, p. 227.

the distant screen of the Argyll and Dumbartonshire hills; the outline of huge Benlomond glowed like a blood-red jewel against the wide golden sky beyond; a thick and hazy cloud of mist had gathered over the rich valleys to the westward, through which, here and there, some far-off bending of the river flashed for a moment in a streak of reflected crimson".¹⁾ But all seemed a mockery.

There is also that idyllic touch of a spring evening when Adam and Charlotte sit resting under the lovely hawthorn tree in the manse garden.

Charlotte herself, the enchantress, is an interesting study, and in comparison with some of Scott's waxen heroines has vitality. She is a tragic figure, but is human, unlike Clara Mowbray, heroine of *St. Roman's Well*, a contemporary novel by Sir W. Scott. She is a living woman of flesh and blood and not a romanticised portrait, correctly clothed, according to period, and viewed from a discreet distance. However, even so, she is not fully articulate.

The contemporary reviewer feels that "evil seems to hover round her" and there is foreboding of sin and distress. "Now and then she is painted in the early stage of the story, with almost disagreeable and repulsive traits; yet somehow or other, the author by the inexplicable power of genius, contrives to render her not only alluring and captivating, but it may be said interesting and amiable".²⁾

The /

1) Adam Blair, p. 6.

2) Blackwood, V. XI, p. 351.

The modern reader sympathises with Charlotte when she is so bitterly repulsed by the minister in his loathing and remorse. In his saner moments, Adam Blair realises with horror, how inhumanly cruel he has been to his partner in sin.

But Charlotte was dealing with no ordinary nature. Here was a young and handsome man, minister of a religion which evoked imagination and conscience by terror; essentially highly-strung, and sensitive, his horrified reaction to his wife's death and subsequent period of utter depression prepare the reader for the flare up of passion. Nor is the final remorse unexpected, for there, the man's spirit, the deep piety inherited from his Covenanting forefather is resurrected.

Wm. Sharpe in his short story - "The Sin Eater" and Nathaniel Hawthorne in his novel "The Scarlet Letter" attempted the same kind of study. In the former a man, an outcast, over the corpse of the one he hated, in symbol, ate the sins of the dead. He tried to fling them into the sea, but they overwhelmed him, and because of the hate in his heart, he was tormented in body and soul until he perished, lashed to a cross of his own making, amid a boiling surge of waters.

In "The Scarlet Letter", the chief character is also a young minister, the Rev. Mr. Dimmesdale, who had not only committed sin, but had allowed Hester Prynne to bear all the infamy of adultery. Among that society of Puritan settlers in North America was the same zeal, amounting to fanaticism, the same rigid moral code as among the Scots Presbyterians of the 18th century. Men like Dimmesdale and Blair were doomed /

doomed. "So, to their unutterable torment, they go about among their fellow creatures looking pure as new-fallen snow; while their hearts are all speckled and spotted with iniquity¹⁾ of which they cannot rid themselves".

Both men ease the burden of their souls by public confession among the people who revered them for their saintliness; Mr. Dimmesdale on a scaffold before the assembled townsmen; Adam Blair in the midst of the Presbytery. In that ruder society, Mr. Dimmesdale reveals the letter of infamy which he had branded on his brest; in the Scottish scene the reverent ministers of the kirk of Scotland bow their heads in affliction, as their young colleague reveals the burden of guilt in his soul. Deep emotions of pity and horror unite the assembly as one man praying humbly before God.

As their reviewer mentions, "it is certain, that even in England, for example, a country of which the clergy, are, generally speaking, a most moral class of men and where no immoral clergyman can escape contempt, the banishment and suffering of Adam Blair will be considered by many as too great for his sin, whereas in Scotland, his sin will be considered by many as too great to justify his restoration to his sacred²⁾ office, even after years of humiliation and repentance".

Actually there was such an episode enacted in the parish of Cathcart in 1748, when one Mr. Adam was sentenced by /

1)- The Scarlet Letter, p. 156, by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

2) Blackwood, p. 350, V. XI.

by the Presbytery of Glasgow for immoral conduct. Subsequently, after undergoing a "course of discipline" before the congregation at Cathcart; he was recommended by the Presbytery to be restored. This request was granted by the Assembly. Adam Blair underwent no "course of discipline", but that administered by his own conscience; his greatest scene of ordeal, after his appearance before the Presbytery at Glasgow is in his own church at Cross Meikle on the first Sunday after his return as a humble labourer. The incident is very touchingly described by Lockhart; the parishioners show unexpected delicacy.

"Every eye followed him to his place; and not a few of them were suffused with tears, as the fallen man was seen turning, with an unsteady hand, the leaves of his Bible, and pointing out to his daughter the passage the Minister was reading. But, after the first moment, - such is the grace of that natural courtesy which politeness never surpasses, and seldom equals, - there was not one grown up person there who did not endeavour to avoid looking towards the corner in which Adam Blair had taken refuge".¹⁾

It is interesting to note that there is now a flourishing Methodist church at Cathcart, established as a result of Wesley's crusade. The scene before the Presbytery in Adam Blair recalls the early Methodist Confessional Meetings. Accounts of these are found in the Armenian or Methodist Magazine and the spiritual experiences of converts described there /

1) Adam Blair, p. 317.

there, now make strange reading. There was material there for novelists, and later in their time, the Brontës show the influence of these "miracles of modern saints" in their fiction. In the Quarterly Review Article XIII, November 1810, there is stringent criticism of the confessional methods. While admitting the good qualities of Methodism, the reviewer deploras the perfervid language.

"All right for those who have a lip humility - but what is to become of those whose understanding is too strong or whose imagination is too weak to render them capable of this assurance (of delivery from damnation) and who are yet persuaded that without it their souls must perish everlastingly?"

However Adam Blair is manly enough to work out his own salvation unlike Werther (with whom John Galt compared the Scottish minister) who being of the rich German burgher society had nothing with which to oppose his Weltschmerz but suicide, while in Rousseau's La Nouvelle Héloïse, the problem resolves itself into a conflict between the individual with his private passions, and society.

Galt inferred that though Adam Blair belonged to the class of Werther and La Nouvelle Héloïse, it was inferior because it consisted of sketches of passion instead of the expression of those passions in action.

Curiously enough he insisted that Adam Blair was a book expressing the universal feelings of mankind instead of peculiar or national affections. Yet what could be more Scottish /

Scottish than the characters of Adam Blair, the minister with his terrible Calvinist conscience, or Mrs. Semple, "one of that (once numerous) class of ladies in Scotland, who, virtuous and religious, and every way estimable as they may be do a great many things as if they believed the stomach to be by far the most important part in the whole construction of every human being".

"Thomas, take down the cauld pye to John Anderson's wi' my compliments - and say, I'm very glad to hear their calland's come back - and stay, Thomas since ye're about it, ye may as weel tak some o' yon finnon haddocks, and a bottle¹⁾ or twa of your ale wi' you too".

That kindly broad Scotch tongue is unmistakable. Old Dr. Muir too, that crusty old Scot with the tender heart, is fit partner for the lady of Semplehaugh, indeed both might have appeared in any of Susan Ferrier's novels, and represent a Scots man and woman of humours. Even Duncan Strahan, coarse-grained, successful W.S. of rosy face and lace ruffles, and Campbell of Uigness "with his heather-legs; nose blown up a good deal by snuff and brandy, or both; keen grey eyes; hair, eyebrows, and whiskers bristly red; bob-major dressed a merveille and his Dutch uniform fine as five pence", though slightly sketched, again resemble Susan Ferrier's Highlanders, with the romance slightly blown, rather than Sir Walter's Waverley heroes.

Old John Maxwell too, of whom it might be said, as written /

1) Adam Blair, p. 31.

written in the Edinburgh Annual Register for 1816 - "A Scotch peasant is attached to his Bible, not only because it is depository for defence of doctrines of Calvin and Knox and Boston - The language of religion is literally his mother tongue".¹⁾

The grave kindly speech of the old man resembles that of Wordsworth's Leech-gatherer. -

"With something of a lofty utterance drest -
Choice word and measured phrase above the reach
Of ordinary men; a stately speech;
Such as grave livers do in Scotland use
Religious men, who give to God and man their dues."²⁾

Indeed John Maxwell "is perfect and equal to anything in MacKenzie".³⁾

Adam Blair is never feebly drawn and on a larger scale might have been a great work. The book deserves to be better known for its power and subtle knowledge of human character, and we can at least say with John Galt - "It is the toe of a Hercules".⁴⁾

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- 1) Dr. A. Mitchell's Note Book 51. National Library of Scotland. Acc. No. 1423.
 - 2) Stanza XIV Resolution and Independence by Wm. Wordsworth.
 - 3) Blackwood V. XI p. 349, March 1822.
 - 4) From Dr. Mitchell's Note Book 13. Lockhart Letters in Blackwood's Archives 1818-1833. N.L.S.

IV

THE HISTORY OF MATTHEW WALD.

In the interval between Adam Blair and the next strange tale, Matthew Wald, Lockhart wrote a more pleasing novel, which Scott ¹⁾ tells us, had great success in its own day - this was Reginald Dalton. Here, Lockhart was drawing on his Oxford days, and again he is among the first to write on the subject of English university life. His hero, Reginald Dalton, son of a minister, becomes a typical undergraduate and meets many of the professional celebrities of the day; he is a kind of fairly respectable Tom Jones - a decent lad, neither too good nor too bad, who has many little weaknesses, and becomes involved in all the student rags of the day. The novel presents a vivid picture of contemporary university society. After many mishaps the boy ends well enough. There is a love theme with the niece of a very charming Roman Catholic priest, some excellent character studies, and some fine descriptions of the colleges. ²⁾ There is a great gusto in the book. "If you have ever happened to travel that road about the end of October, you have probably seen a great deal even of the more transitory and occasional sort of things that fell under the inspection of Reginald /

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- 1) Scott in letter to Lady Abercorn (June 4th, 1824) - The Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart - by Andrew Lang, p. 348, Vol. I.
 2) Reginald Dalton, p. 214, Vol. I.

Reginald and his companions. You have probably observed abundance of rosy-cheeked old Staffordshire parsons, in grey-worsted stockings, seeing their sons into the Oxford-bound coach, just below the rectory ha-ha. You have been annoyed with the troops of empty, talking, consequential, beardless "men", chattering to each other about "First Class" and "Second Class" - Sir Roger Newdigate's prize-poem - the Dean of Christchurch - Coplestone's pamphlets - and the Brazen-nose Eight-oar. You have been amused with the smug tutors, in tight stocking pantaloons and gaiters, endeavouring to shew how completely they can be easy, well-bred, well-informed, men of the world, when they have not their masters' gowns upon their back - hazarding a jocular remark, perhaps, even to an undergraduate the one moment, and biting their lips, and drawing themselves up the moment after. You have been distressed with their involuntary quotations from Joe Miller and the Quarterly Review; and if you have taken a second "cheerer" with them after supper, you may have been regaled with some classical song out of The Sausage - "the swapping, swapping Mallard".

There is an infectious gaiety about the anecdotes of gaunt tutors, plump Provosts, vinegary, literary spinsters and roistering Town and Gown men, all part and parcel of Lockhart's own hilarious youth, and told with all the ease of a practised raconteur. Contemporary reviewers found the book too much of a hotch-potch to be an excellent novel, but did /

did not deny that it had material that made it an entertaining one. From "Reginald Dalton," Lockhart learned nothing further on the structure of novels, so that he came to "Matthew Wald," no better qualified.

The "History of Matthew Wald" appeared in 1824, the year in which Lockhart lost his little daughter, and perhaps, premonition of his own domestic tragedies, contributed to the gloom of this story. "Perhaps no novel of that date is so modern in its disagreeableness and its unpleasant quality which was already called power".¹⁾

It is a tale written in the first person of an unhappy man called Matthew Wald. The story, told to his heir, opens with a description of the family genealogy from Norman times, and a grim recital of the death of his uncle - a fugitive from Culloden, - who wounded had hidden in a bog outside his brother's house for two days and nights, before he dared seek admittance from his Hanoverian Kinsman.

His father and he then took up residence with his aunt and little cousin Katherine at Blackford, the forfeited estate, near Edinburgh. The two children were brought up together and educated at an old pedagogue's school. There is an amusing little vignette of this school. "His old mother lived at the other end of the cottage, and seldom a day passed without her leaving her wheel once or twice, that she might come into the school-room, and refresh her eyes with the contemplation /

1) "Life and Letters of J.G. Lockhart", A. Lang, p. 348.

contemplation of his glory. On such occasions the worthy soul cocked his night-cap, sat up more erect in his chair, and rolled out his vocables in a tone of more awful authority".¹⁾

This little sketch is reminiscent of other eighteenth descriptions, such as Oliver Goldsmith's, village school master, "in his noisy mansion skilled to rule", or Shenstone's village schoolmistress.

However Matthew Wald's days of merry childhood were numbered, for when he was ten years old, his father, the Captain, died of a stroke. As in Adam Blair, the death scene is strikingly described and seems to foreshadow gloom. "A delightful evening tempted him and he came into the garden to enjoy the sunset from his favourite bower. My aunt had her work in her lap - Katherine was on his knee, and I was sitting at his foot reading Blind Harry aloud to them all, when suddenly in a single moment, my father groaned aloud and fell back in his chair speechless". The small Matthew ran for the doctor; by the time he returned, all was over.

"Never shall I forget the change that was on the face. My father had been a very full-blooded man the cheeks and indeed the whole countenance almost, of a dark red colour, the general expression fiery and vehement. But now, marble could not have been paler, nor any features carved in marble more Severe" "I stared on the dead body with helpless terror /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 184.

terror, as if it had been some fearfully placid thing seen
 1)
 in a dream".

After a huge public funeral, a neighbouring gentleman, Grahame of Bogtoun, tells the littly boy that his father had settled the estate, "free and entire upon Katherine - burdened, however, with the original jointure to her mother - just in short, as if there had never been either a rebellion or a forfeiture - and that his own original patrimony, as a younger
 2)
 brother of Blackford, was all that remained for his own son".

A few years after Matthew's father's death, a new tutor arrives to teach the children - the new minister of the parish - a strong, athletic handsome man; there is something in the suggestion of "fine large white teeth beside his close-shaven black beard" to suggest the animal. "When he spoke with his full voice, the effect was harsh; but he had a
 3)
 whispering under-tone that was rather mild and engaging".

In a short time, Mr. Mather had so far ingratiated himself with Matthew's aunt, that he married her. The tutor's conciliatory attitude towards the children disappeared; the pleasant lessons became a penance, though they were of short duration and Katherine and Matthew Wald roamed the hills like gipsies on their ponies. On one occasion, the ponies bolted home /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 185.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 186.

3) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 187.

home, leaving the children to trudge five miles on foot. Next morning, as a punishment, Mr. Mather binds Matthew to a tree in the orchard and thrashes him.

When the boy recovers a little, he takes to the heath on his pony, but urged by hunger, rides down to the village. There he runs into the minister, driving in a whiskey. After furious altercation, "the proud priest made a cut at me with his whip and though I sprung my pony to one side as quickly as possible, the end of the lash hit me sharply across the face, just below the eyes". With his gully knife Matthew cuts the reins, gives the old horse "a bitter cut or two under the belly" with his switch; all the time, the minister lashes at him "but I took it all"¹⁾.

The minister is thrown from his vehicle and strikes his head. However, he is not killed, as the boy at first believed, and on his return to the house, relations though cold and formal, are resumed between Mr. and Mrs. Mather and himself. "But how deadly pale was his cheek! and once or twice when my glance was drawn towards him suddenly and furtively, I saw the fire that was glowing deep down in his fixed eyeballs and marked the quivering malice that struggled with a faint smile upon his lips"²⁾.

Both scenes of recrimination show more than a touch of the sadistic in the character of Mather; the reader feels a /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 192.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 195.

a sense of relief at the boy's wild justice. Yet, though Mather was wantonly cruel, the intensity of Matthew's hatred was not the angry flare-up of a mortified boy; already there were the seeds of great and terrible emotions in his being, but Lockhart also skilfully builds up a picture of a boy's passion and disgust. Pride of race too serves to accentuate the bitterness, for Mather's father had been a barber - "conceive how I grinded my teeth as I lay counting hour after hour through the night, upon the sweet idea that I was trodden under foot by the spawn of a village shaver - that he had whipped me - that I had borne the marks of him upon my back! Conceive the intense perceptions I now had of his ineradicable baseness - conceive the living disgust that crept through me whenever he coughed or sneezed - above all, when he laughed. His slow, deliberate, loud brazen Ha! - ha! - ha! - What a sound that was! His fine large white teeth seemed to me as if they belonged to some overgrown unclean beast - some great monstrous rat. Every, the very least motion spoke whole volumes of filth. What exquisite vulgarity did I not see in his broad flat nails bitten to the quick¹⁾".

It was thus that the children in the House with the Green Shutters or in Hatter's Castle were, later on, to ponder on their fathers; the type was to be developed, to crowd out all other studies in those novels; handsome (a virile figure is /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 196.

is associated with their mastery over the weak and deformed) arrogant, brutal, they are not men, but monsters. In Matthew Wald, Mather is associated with the start of ill-fortune in Matthew's career.

Susan Ferrier had given a picture of a coarse-grained minister in her novel *Destiny* - the Rev. Duncan M'Dow, but the art that went to create him had been used for jocose satire; in Lockhart's book, the same power in drawing repulsive traits is used for a more sinister purpose. Mather had powers of attraction for some, for example for Matthew's aunt, and was loathsome to others, as he was to the highly sensitive boy Matthew. The Rev. Duncan M'Dow is repulsive and merely ridiculous; Mather is repulsive and dangerous.

Mather's attraction for the aunt throws an unpleasant light upon her; pale, repressed colourless individual though she might be, she was capable of spiteful action, and was drawn like a magnet to the florid animalism of Mather. She was a churchgoer too, but her religion, for she passed as a religious woman, was drab, joyless, and did not cover the ordinary virtue of human charity.

The boy's reaction to this treatment is vividly communicated by Lockhart; Matthew knew what it was to be "the boy in an unkind house". "There was a half-choked feeling about my throat that I shall never describe". "Bad feelings and passions were gradually eating into my very soul".¹⁾

Not /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 196.

Not for nothing was Matthew the son of an apoplectic; pent up passion had to be relieved. An opportunity was proffered quite soon. Matthew had been invited to dine at the house of a friend of his father - one Major Vans who had some baillies as guests. In the course of a riotous evening, young Matthew, quite tipsy, was induced to tell of his juvenile adventure with Mr. Mather in the whiskey. When Matthew rode home, the next morning, he was greatly disconcerted to find one of the guests of the previous evening, breakfasting with the family. Matthew had no doubt that the pleasantries of the supper party would be recounted.

On that very afternoon, Mr. Mather calmly told him that he had arranged for Matthew's admittance to St. Andrew's University and that he was to proceed immediately.

The incident of the Major's supper-party is depicted with the art of the cartoon; the sketch of the old reprobate Major Vans himself - "long trumpet-nose, blown up with every possible modification of alcohol - the old leering, winking, cunning eyes - the enormous watery lips - and highly-powdered toupee!" - is in Galt's style of droll anecdote; there is about it too a flavour of old Edinburgh days:-

"A sheep's-head at the head of the table, a mountain of salted beef at the bottom, and a huge dish of boiled carrots in the middle". - "champagne flying about like small beer - hock in black bottles of the most extraordinary shapes - and claret in great pewter jugs, which an old, squinting, gouty butler replenished every now and then from a barrel that stood upon /

upon a couple of chairs in the corner of the room"¹⁾.

The frolic after the dinner too is quite in keeping with Galt's parochial humour, as in "The Provost" for instance. There is an electioneering campaign in a neighbouring burgh. The major has a friend standing as candidate, and byguile, he decoys the worthy deacons and baillies into a fine coal pit in the vicinity, where they find a wine cellar. "There, the trusty magistrates made the best of a bad bargain and sat contentedly, until their host was pleased to release them - which it is unnecessary to add was not until the hour of election was long over, and the Major's ally chaired in all form and glory"²⁾.

At St. Andrews, Matthew is fairly happy, for he is lodged in the house of one Professor Patterson whose maiden sister acts as a mother to the young student and helps to "oil his rustic awkwardness."³⁾ So devoted was she that Matthew imagined her to be in love with him; what confusion was in store for him when the "fat little beauty" announced her forthcoming marriage to the Rev. John MacKay, of the "dry adust complexion, figure of Herculean ponderosity and glee irrepressible".

After Miss Patterson's departure, the Professor degenerated rapidly into a sloven, and it was in a very dull house /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 198.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 201.

3) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 202.

4) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 205.

house, that Matthew spent his first two summer vacations, for Mr. Mather had arranged that he should not return to Blackford. Being a hard reader, Matthew received approbation from the college teachers and continued his studies for a third year. After that, he had a great hankering to return to Blackford, a hankering strengthened by the fact that he suspected "dark settled deliberate malevolence"¹⁾ hatched against him. Occasionally he had heard from Mrs. Mather and from Katherine, but to add to his pain, he felt that the latter had grown away from him.

Being a young man of extraordinary activity, Matthew, suddenly leaving St. Andrews on his own responsibility, walked to Blackford. Meeting with his old dominic and hailing him in familiar Latin, he learned from the old man that Mr. Mather was away in the North, and that for the past year, the Hon. George Lascelyne had been domiciled in the house of his ancient preceptor.

When Matthew arrived, though his cousin Kate greeted him warmly and Mr. Mather, politely, he felt very keenly that the young lord usurped their attention. Very humanly is Matthew's chagrin described. Both Mother and daughter seemed delighted at the young lord's familiarity.

"His very way of picking his teeth, had all the quiet loftiness of presumption in it. There was the quintessence²⁾ of the aristocratic in his hollow laugh". Worst of all, - the /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 207.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 211.

the young lord despised him and loved his cousin. While Lascelyne and Katherine rode out up the glen, Matthew either sulked in his garret, contemplating his unpolished person in a great cracked mirror, or wandered out to the paddock, where the old playmates of his childhood, the ponies seemed by their nuzzling to give him greater welcome than their human relatives. On that very day, Mr. Mather returned, and to Matthew's astonishment, greeted him cordially. It was soon disclosed that the minister was to be appointed Principal through the efforts of his patrons, the Lascelynes.

Next morning, news of his success having come, the Minister proposed a visit to a neighbouring beauty spot and a picnic there. Matthew, during the ride there, becoming separated from the rest of the party, came upon Lascelyne and Katherine involved in a tender scene. After that, though his heart was bursting with emotions, his mind was made up. He informed Mr. Mather that he would like to travel, and that gentleman could not conceal his delight at the thought of getting rid of Matthew Wald. He was all amiability and suggestion.

On his way to bed that night, Matthew heard Katherine sobbing bitterly, and he himself being but a boy, spent the last night in his father's house, in tears.

At five o'clock next morning, he tiptoed away. "I could never describe the feelings with which I took my parting look of it from the bridge. The pride, the scorn, the burning scorn /

scorn, that boiled above - the cold, curdling anguish below -
the bruised, trampled heart ¹⁾ -".

When he reached Edinburgh, Matthew discovered that Principal Mather had put him in control of his entire patrimony, amounting to a little less than £1,000.

Having missed a vessel bound for Holland, Matthew had the ill-luck to fall in with an old crony, apprenticed to his brother Nathaniel Todd, a successful lawyer. Perhaps the name was selected to hint the characteristics of the man, those of the old fox in the fables. Under the influence of the bottle, Matthew disclosed his story, and was persuaded against his own better feelings and judgment to contest his father's will. The lawyer's deduction had been that Mather was repaying his patron's bounty by giving to his son, the Hon. George Lascelyne the hand and estate of Katherine Wald. Long before the case terminated, the Hon. George married Miss Wald. Matthew, as a result of losing in the lawsuit, was practically a beggar, but worst of all, he had to reproach himself with having yielded to a base passion. Having discovered, how he has been tricked, Matthew is tempted to do away with himself.

In the midst of his grief, he forms one of a packed jury who are to award to an Aberdeenshire laird, a crony of Todd/

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 225.

Todd, the rights to a baronetcy. Matthew is now assisting in some of the trickery that had duped him. There is a charming scene, during a quiet moment that evening, when Matthew, withdrawing, from the roystering dinner given by the successful Cornraik of Multurelaws, gazes down on the High Street of Edinburgh:- "How clear is the image of that mement before me now? - The sun had apparently been below the horizon for an hour or two - the rich warm twilight - the swarming High Street - (it was more like a square than a street in those days) - the groups of gentlemen walking backwards and forwards - the ladies in their chairs, with footmen, and some of them with flambeaux - the whole effect gay, though not glittering, full of an endless variety of colour and shadow - a softened scene of sprightliness, grace, and beauty. Some strolling Savoyards, with brown shining faces full of mirth, were exhibiting their wares to a crowd of girls under our window, and this had occasioned the noise that drew me from the table, or, rather, that gave me a pretence for quitting it for a moment".¹⁾

Later that night, when Matthew is tempted to use his father's broadsword on himself, he is deterred by the sight of Katherine's little red psalm book caught in the basket handle. She, before she had departed north, had written privately a little note wishing Matthew well and hoping they were not to be enemies and strangers, while her husband had /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 239.

had informed Matthew, through Todd the lawyer that he was prepared to defray the costs of the suit. Matthew is in a maelstrom of conflicting passions over these letters, when he encounters the drunken Todd returning from the dinner.

The sight of that "sleek, fat-faced unfeeling
1) brute" who had already entrusted one of his assistants to draw up with many flourishes a huge "Account of Charge and Discharge between Matthew Wald Esquire and Nathaniel Todd, C.S." made Matthew relinquish the thought of slaying himself on his account.

"After that, Matthew Wald was established "pro tempore in mine own hired house", "in their words, tenant of a garret at three shillings a week, in a lodging house near the foot of the Covenant Close; master of a very tolerable wardrobe, my father's gold watch and Andrew Ferrara - a cheque for £100 upon the Bank of Scotland - and some five guineas, odd shillings in cash - master moreover of a strong and muscular body - and perhaps not quite master of an active,
2) aimless and miserable mind".

Having fallen in with a medical student, an acquaintance, one Jack Spreule by name, Matthew spends his evenings with him roystering or debating on a possible future career. Matthew, hankering after a soldiering career, applies at the house of a great lord, an old friend of his father, where he is amused, and /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 242.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 244.

and at the same time mortified, by the vanity of the old man who drawing himself up to his full height, points out that Matthew's five feet, three inches is under the statutory height.

Matthew, after this incident, plunges into a merry life with the cosmopolitan medical students of the time, who had flocked to Edinburgh, to study at the famous school of medicine - "stout, well-bearded lads, most of them - audacious whiskers of every dye - oaths and dog¹⁾-latin in abundance; and no scarcity of gin and tobacco".

As a result of this companionship Matthew is involved in a ghoulish expedition to a churchyard in search of dissecting material. The party of medical students is attacked by an outraged village community and in the fray that ensues, Matthew takes to the river. While swimming, he is struck on the head by a missile. When he returns to consciousness, he finds himself esconced in the manse of the saintly old minister of the Parish of Kynnemond. Matthew finds he has lost his pocket book containing the last £100, and in his enfeebled and melancholy condition, finds it a relief to open his heart to the good old man. The latter comfort him with his own tale of hardships; he is now left with a delicate grandson Tommy "a poor, feeble little memorial of guilt" who had inherited his father's disease.²⁾

Old /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 249.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 257.

Old Mr. Meikle advises Matthew to use his education and become tutor in one of the families of the Scotch gentry. At first, the plan was repugnant to the proud Matthew, however, under the name of Waldie, he was appointed tutor to the family of Sir Claud Barr. His pupil was "a pretty boy of ten or eleven" and he was expected to help the governess of the two girls in the "departments of grammar and geography".¹⁾

An older daughter, by a former marriage, was a striking contrast to the blonde sisters, tall and erect like their lady-mother, Lady Juliana. Miss Joanne was small and slender, dark of complexion and smouldering black of eye when her glance encountered the cold gaze of Lady Juliana and her daughters. Matthew at once sensed some drama in the family history. The Baronet, afflicted with gout, and unhappy in temperament, kept to his room; the rest of the family spent their time in dullness. On occasions when Lady Juliana and her daughters were visiting "the ceremony of the place re-²⁾laxed" and Miss Blamyre, the governess and Miss Joanne found the young tutor modest helpful and "quite the gentleman". In his leisure hours, Matthew read text-books on medicine and anatomy, and formed a new life for himself.

An excellent Scottish study is provided by Lockhart in the person of Mrs. Babby Baird - Mammy Baird as she was called - an old nurse and fixed retainer of the Barr household. Among /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 262.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 264.

Among the small Scots Novels, she corresponds to the study of Mrs. Macaulay in Susan Ferrier's *Destiny* and holds the same privileged position in a noble family. She had many of the same accomplishments as Mrs. Macaulay - "tho' far beyond four-score, old age had not bowed her form, nor even to all appearance affected her vigour. Strong and muscular, she could still dance a reel upon occasion with the youngest. But it was her singing that was the chief wonder. She had a prodigious fund of ballads, and used to chaunt them at the fireside in a deep melancholy steady tone of voice that had something about it singularly interesting, and even affecting".¹⁾

Her versatility was also something like that of Mrs. Macaulay. "The young people consulted her about their ribbons, the Lady relied on her advice, touching the housemaids and the poultry, and the Baronet, when he was confined to his chamber, took medicine most commonly from the hand of nobody but Mammy Baird".

While Mrs. Macaulay had a bird-like charm about her, Mammy Baird is a more serious, venerable old Scots type, something perhaps like one of Rembrandt's wise, kindly old women. She is the repositior too of family secrets, and tells her favourite Matthew, the story of a picture, he has found in his garret. It depicts a lovely foreign-looking girl, a Jewess of Flanders, who had eloped with Sir Claud Barr in the old days. Under the exhortation of his uncle, the Colonel, Sir Claud is induced /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 266.

induced under pains of being disinherited, to marry Lady Juliana and to desert "Pearling Joan", as the servants called the Flemish girl, and her child.

On the day when Sir Claud and his lady arrived at Barrmains, as the coach came rattling up the drive "just as fast as fire ever flew frae flint, a woman in a red cloak rushed out from among the auld shrubbery at the west end of the house and fling herself in among the horses' feet, and the wheels gaed clean over her breast, and crumbled her dead in a single moment"¹⁾.

After that recital, Matthew Wald viewed Miss Joanne with greater interest than ever. However, an incident occurred which swerved his thoughts to another channel, for one night, Katherine Wald and her husband came under the same roof. For one instant, the hazel eyes of Katherine meet the burning ones of Matthew. Neither speaks, but for Matthew, the old throbbing pain and turmoil of the spirit are resumed.

After this, fear of a recurring visit made Matthew think of changing his situation. Fate however did this for him, for Sir Charles Barr was one day found dead in his room. After the funeral, Lady Juliana intimated that she with her daughters were moving south and that, as her son would attend Eton, Mr. Wald's services were no longer required.

Miss Joanne had been utterly cast off, but Mammy Baird proffered her the shelter of her humble cottage.

Through /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 282.

Through the services of Dr. Dalrymple, a retired army doctor who had lent Matthew, the medical text books, the young man was to be apprenticed to old Mr. Ronaldson - chief surgeon of a neighbouring market town, - if he could pass his medical examination either at Edinburgh or Glasgow within six months, "it being understood that the night work and the long rides were to fall to my share"¹⁾.

After a tender farewell to Joanne, Matthew takes up residence in Glasgow with a poor shoemaker, John M'Ewan in the Auld Vennel of Glasgow, where he lives a Spartan and strenuously athletic existence. In the course of his stay two accidents occurred which interrupted his teaching in the evenings. He poisoned his hand and had the courage to scrape the skin to the bone. Lockhart probably introduced this incident to show the quality of Matthew's physical courage - how swift his action and how ruthless.

The other incident is all the more gruesome, because unexpected; John M'Ewan, a rigid and pious Cameronian, his humble landlord, brutally murdered a farmer for the money he had received that day in the market. At first, guilt is placed at the door of the young doctor, but he is soon acquitted and recounts the iron nerve of the man at the scaffold. Both incidents suggest "Terror Novel" influence.

Having procured his degree, a few books and instruments, Matthew began his career with Mr. Ronaldson as country practitioner the hardest of lives, yet Matthew enjoyed it. It suited his wild /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 282.

wild temperament "to dash down the windy glens at midnight"
or "swim his horse across a roaring mountain stream"¹⁾.

He was sufficiently the student of nature to enjoy the pageant of human character. "I took a pleasure in observing the ways of going on in the different places, I was called to. I partook in the bowl of punch, with which the farmer moistened his anxiety during the confinement of his spouse - listened to the tea-table chat of the gossips - heard the latest news of last month from the laird, or the fashions of last year from the lady - discussed the characters of Lord Granby and the Hereditary Prince with the old epaulette - the rate of fiars with the minister, - tasted whisky reaming hot from the still - and rode cheek-by-jowl with the justice, the exciseman, or the smuggler, just as it might happen"²⁾.

Matthew had resumed acquaintanceship with Mammy Baird and Joanne, to whom after a year of probationing, he became married much to Mammy Baird's delight. There is a hint however that gentle compassion for a loving and trusting girl rather than love, urges Matthew to this course. "Seared and blasted bosom" are words expressive of a wild passion, which left only a mild glow of gratitude for Joanne's affection.

As Matthew became proficient, he had to bear the brunt of the work, for many new patients sent for the clever young doctor. Dissatisfaction over payment caused a rift with Dr. Ronaldson, so that Matthew began a small but independent practice of his own.

At /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 295.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 295.

At this time, the itinerant Methodists of England found their way to Scotland and Joannè instantly fell under the spell of Whitefield's preaching, though Matthew noted with sadness that a "despairing gloom" seemed to settle on her spirits after that, and she began to frequent open-air preachings.

Shortly after this, young Claud Barrmain, Matthew's late young pupil is drowned while at Eton, and old Mammy Baird perishes from a stroke. Included among some trifles left by her to Joanne, were some old love letters belonging to her mother and Sir Claude Barr, in one of which, the latter addressed the Flemish lady as his wife. Matthew, remembering a little of Scots law, thinks the phrase is striking enough, and takes counsel on the subject from a neighbouring law lord Thirleton, of whom Lockhart gives a little thumb sketch, which must surely have been inspired by an actual worthy of the Scottish Bench.

"I found his lordship sitting on the turfen fence of one of his belts of fir, in his usual rural costume of a scratch-wig, a green jacket, Shetland hose, and short black gaiters. A small instrument, ingeniously devised for serving at once as a walking cane, a hoe, and a weed-grubber, rested against his knee and, while reposing a little to recruit his wind, he was indulging himself with a quiet perusal of a conspectus and answers which he had brought with him in his pocket"

"Love-letters /

"Love-letters lad?" said he rubbing his hands;
 "let's see them, let's see them. I like a love letter from
 my heart, man - what signifies speaking - semel insanirimus
 1)
 omnes".

The touch of the fir-belt is significant, becomes
 it was due to the Scots law lords and men of property, that
 agriculture and the cultivation and improving of the land came
 into being through their bold experiments in the eighteenth
 century.

After an ensuing law suit, which is settled out of
 court, proving Joanne's legitimacy and settling Barmains
 on her, Matthew and his wife again enter the fashionable world,
 on a rather different footing from that of the humble and
 rather shamed dependent and tutor.

Among the hosts of visitors and newly-resurrected
 relatives, came the Methodists - "apostles of this perilous
 2)
 sect" and Matthew saw that his wife had completely fallen
 under their influence.

At this juncture of affairs, Matthew was approached
 by a Marquis, to stand for Parliament. Hoping to distract
 Joanne from her excessive enthusiasm for the Methodists,
 Matthew plunged into the canvassing campaign - "played whist
 with the lady-bailies, and lost every rubber; danced with
 their daughters, until my wind was half-broken; slobbered
 the children, squeezed the hands of the chambermaids, and did
 everything /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 312.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 320.

everything that becomes a most kind, loving, kissing gentleman".¹⁾

On his return from a visit to his patron before he left Scotland, Matthew, calling at the village of St. Dees, discovers his old friend Mrs. MacKay, his patroness of St. Andrews, who tells him that he is in the neighbourhood of the Lascelyne's abode.

As if drawn by magnet, as he passes the demesne of his old antagonist, he dismounts to examine an old ruined castle; while there, he is surprised by Lascelyne himself and a strange lady. Matthew is not sure whether Lascelyne recognizes him.

Meanwhile his poor wife having fallen in with the Mathers, is persuaded by them into believing that Matthew is on his way north, not to visit his patron but to fight Lascelyne, and beseeches Lord Thirleton to have Matthew bound for 500 marks. As soon as Matthew has cleared up the mystery, he returns to Edinburgh, where, ironically enough, he learns from his own wife, what he had already partly guessed, that Lascelyne had forsaken his wife for a French Madame. It is Joanne who cries -

2)

"He has treated her like a beast these two years"

Moreover, she labours under the delusion that Matthew dislikes Katherine, his cousin, for, of her, he speaks brusquely or is silent, at mention of her name. Katherine, it is reported, has disappeared with her child.

Matthew and his wife depart for London, where Matthew makes his maiden speech in Parliament on the Fishery Bill, with /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 321.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 345.

with gratifying success, rises a second time, is "quizzed" by a wit with whom he later dines, wines and fights a perfunctory duel, during which he receives a flesh wound. It is characteristic that Lockhart makes his hero resent mimicry of his Scots tongue. In the eighteenth century, as has been mentioned in the introductory chapter, Scots gentlemen became sensitive to English mockery, and regarded native words and manners as "barbarisms" to be eradicated.

Joanne and Matthew after this, retire from the fashionable world, to quiet domesticity in a London backwater. Their curiosity is soon aroused by the blankness and silence of the house next door. A beautiful child, seen playing in the garden, was proof that it was inhabited. The coincidence was not very probable, but the house proved to be the hiding place of Katherine Wald and her little boy.

One night, Matthew having heard weeping coming from the neighbouring house, climbed along the branch of a chestnut tree, which overlooked the next house and garden. From his position of vantage, he could gaze in at a window: however the branch broke and he fell with a crash. He was admitted to the house by an old servant who recognized him and soon, Katherine was in his arms. In anguish, he had just wrung from her a confession that she had once loved him, when there came a shriek from behind them. Matthew's wife, having missed him, easily traced where he had gone and entered the room to hear the fatal words.

After /

After this, the tragedy is swift and stark. Joanne dies in childbirth and Matthew's mind becomes unhinged with grief. When he awakens from a stupor, it is to find the undertakers gathered in his wife's room, with all the grisly paraphernalia of death. Mechanically, as the doctor, Matthew performs the last rites for his loved ones, only to be interrupted by Katherine, who comes to tell him that Lascelyne has traced her. To achieve the pitch of emotion, the writing, to modern taste, is strained:-

"I lifted the cloth from Joanne's face. Ah! how calm, how celestially calm! - what a holy tranquillity! - A smile - yes, a smile was fixed on the lips; those soft, silken eyelashes, in what serenity did they sleep upon the marble! - Poor little floweret! thy leaves were scarcely opened; what a light dream must this world be to thee! - I lifted my wife in my arms; the cold ice crept through every fibre in my frame - Gentle soul! what a warm and humble heart has been frozen here! - I laid her in the coffin, and then brought her baby and placed it on her breast - fastening one of the bands round them, so that the position might not be disturbed. I kissed them both and covered them up for ever! - I had seen too much of death not to be well acquainted with my duty. I did everything that is commonly done. I shook in the saw-dust; I scattered the perfumes; I drew the napkin over the cold, sweet faces -
'Farewell, farewell for ever!' said I.¹⁾"

There /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 359.

There is real pathos here, and yet something indefinable is lost through the actual mode of expression; perhaps it is too articulate; perhaps the heavy punctuation is distracting and melodramatic. However, Lockhart handles such situations in a way that places him out of the reach of those hostile contemporary critics who averred that he described situations that in themselves would compel tears without demanding any great art from the novelist.

At this point of the story, a servant enters with a note from Lascelyne, demanding the person of Katherine's child. Matthew rushes out and meeting Lascelyne at the end of the street, compels him to go to a nearby park to fight a duel.

"But after the first minute of ceremony, what a joke was all this! - I rushed upon him, sir, as if I had been some horned brute. I had no more thought of guards and passes than if I had been a bison. He stabbed me thrice - thrice through the arm - clean through the arm - that was my guard - but what signified this? I felt his blade as if it had been a gnat, a nothing. At last my turn came - I spitted him through the heart - I rushed on till the hilt stopped me - I did not draw my steel out of him - I spurned him off it with my foot.

'Lie there, rot there, beast -!' a single groan, and his eye fixed.

The Staggyrite says you cannot hate the dead:- He never hated - I dipped my shoe in his blood."¹⁾

There /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 367.

There is a repulsive savagery here, that is meant to suggest that clouding madness has come over Matthew. The victor then rushes back to tell Katharine that she is free, but his cousin perceives the blood dripping on the floor; she screams:- "My husband! My Lascelyne!" and falls dead at Matthew's feet. Again there is a sensational, melodramatic quality about the lines -

"Heavens and earth! that I should write this down!
One shriek - one - just one!

Fainted? - swooned? - Dead! Oh! dead - I remember
1)
no more."

The reader remembers that this nineteenth century was the one that produced East Lynne.

After that, terrible insanity overtakes Matthew and he relives in agony, both physical and mental, the horrible events just related; little, terrifying scenes flit through his brain, as he lies, a victim to the keeper of the mad-house. Here the narrative breaks off and the kinsman resumes the tale, recounting that Matthew's amazing strength of body allowed him to recover, gradually; that he became a delightful old man, vigorous and cheerful, and beloved by all, but that, at times, a deep melancholy settled over him. In the end, he returned to Blackford (for he had given up his rights to his wife's estate) to die. It is from this kinsman, that we hear of Matthew's generosity, and of his great personal charm. With his picture of the empty chair, the walking-cane, flute and newspapers scattered, the reader takes leave /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 368.

leave of Matthew Wald, in "calm of mind all passion spent."

"Matthew Wald" was hailed by the critic in Blackwood (V. XV. - LXXXVIII -) May 1824, as indubitable evidence of the rapid progress which its author has made in the knowledge of mankind "since he first appeared in the field of romance, and also in the art of composition". "The style of Matthew Wald exhibits prodigious improvement as to harmony of tone; it is quite free from the faults of prolixity and turgidity and bears the impress not merely of great but of uniform power".

Scott, on the other hand, writing to Lady Abercorn, says of the book that "Matthew Wald is misery from the title
1)
page to the finis".

Modern opinion would probably lie between these two judgements. The structure of the novel has certainly not improved, for whereas in Adam Blair, there was one chief digression with the story of Charlotte Campbell's life, that passage was, if not an integral part of the plot, closely connected with it. In Matthew Wald, there are many digressions, out of all proportion to the length of the tale, and but loosely connected with the main theme, though Blackwood's reviewer lauds them as "several exquisitely beautiful episodes", diversifying "the main tenor of this story, e.g. the tales of Peggy Brown, Pearling Joan, Mammy Baird".

Yet that novel is surely not "misery" from start to finish, which furnishes several excellent miniatures of Scottish character, like the matriarchal Mammy, the old Lord of Session, and the rascally Nat Todd.

The /

1) June 4th, 1824. The Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart Vol. I. p. 348. Andrew Lang.

The "disagreeableness" which Scott and Andrew Lang denounce, and which the critic in the Review gracefully waves aside, is identified, principally with the hero himself, and with two or three characters who have a bent towards religion.

The reviewer in Blackwood was probably right in asserting that the use of the first person was excellent for the anatomising of one man's mind;- "laying bare the inmost workings of a human mind has often been a disenchanting process, perhaps because authors gravitate towards unravelling morbid complexes"¹⁾, and of this class of novelist, Lockhart was one of the first. His chief character, Matthew Wald is a violent man; the speed of the tale is in keeping with its passionate narrator. In person, he is unattractive and has little to recommend him to the readers sympathy save the series of misfortunes in which he is involved by unscrupulous and unpleasant characters. His great physical strength and indifference to bodily pain make his impending madness all the more terrible. Positive evil in the book is connected with religion. Mr. Mather sensual and powerful uses religion as a successful career, and under the guise of a respectable clergyman perpetrates acts of cruelty and sadism; John M'Ewan represents the religious fanatic, an extremist Cameronian, who carries the same ruthlessness into his everyday life, to commit a sordid murder for money. "Never was such a specimen of that insane pride. The very agony of this man's humiliation had a spice of holy exultation in it; there /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 293.

there was in the most penitent of his lugubrious glances still something that said or seemed to say -

"Abuse me - spurn me as you will - I loathe myself
also; but this deed is Satan's"¹⁾.

A third aspect of religion in which Lockhart was interested, and with which he shows a slight sympathy, was the quickening of evangelicism, through the influence of Whitefield's preaching in Scotland. The treatment of the Methodist revival in the literature of the eighteenth century makes strange and interesting reading. References are naturally more numerous in English than in Scottish literature, for the movement came later to Scotland. There is a gradual rapprochement towards Methodism, throughout the century, symbolized by "The Confessions of J. Lackington, late Bookseller at the Temple of the Muses" - a recantation of all abuse heaped by that Worthy on the sect.

Pope and his circle denounced Methodism as a pose; Dr. Johnson was willing to recognize the sincerity of the great preachers. Oliver Goldsmith makes scant reference to Methodists, though he suggests that "even" Whitefield might be a model to some young divines; on the other hand, Tony Lumpkin has a thrust at them:-

"When Methodist preachers come down
And preaching that drinking is sinful
I'll wager the rascals a crown
They'll always preach best with a skinful"²⁾

- but perhaps this may be accounted as of old -
legitimate game for the clown. To Fielding, a Methodist was
a/

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 293.

2) "She stoops to Conquer" Act I, Sc. 2.

a hypocrite - and from the judge no worse censure could be passed. Blifil - villain of Tom Jones, settled in New England, "has lately turned Methodist in hopes of marrying a rich widow of that sect"¹⁾; and in Amelia, Booth was robbed by a Methodist.

Richardson was probably more approving in his attitude and commends Methodists in Sir Charles Grandison as "having given a face of religion to subterranean colliers, turners and the most profligate of men"²⁾.

As symbolising that stratum of eighteenth century life that was most intolerant of any "enthusiasm", religious or otherwise (poor Wesley had to combat that word practically all through his career) and as representing the most able, if most callous critic, of his time. Horace Walpole in his letters, castigates the Methodists.

"I have been at one Opera, Mr. Wesley's" Of the great preacher's sermons, the wit remarks:-

"There were parts and eloquence in it; but towards the end, he exalted his voice and acted very ugly enthusiasm"³⁾.

The genuine lyrists of the century, Christopher Smart, Cowper and Blake show the best influence of Evangelicalism in their poetry; Smart and Cowper both reveal in their religious poetry /

1) Tom Jones, Vol. ii. p. 411.

2) Sir Charles Grandison, Vol. VI, p. 35, by Samuel Richardson.

3) The Letters of Horace Walpole, ed. by Miss Paget, V. VII, 1766.

poetry; the fervour of the awakening spirit. Cowper fell under the Calvinistic, as represented by Whitefield, rather than the Armenian beliefs as represented by Wesley, and probably this stern theology aggravated his malady - this sense of being a "stricken deer" or one "damned below Judas". Yet, in his calm moments, the pure lyrical note of the hymns, owes much to the Evangelical message.

As the century drew to a close, all that was mellow and moderate in its thought drew from writers sympathetic or or passionate admiration for Methodism. "Blake, the greatest poet of the Evangelical Revival, gave the most vital imaginative expression to the spirit behind it"¹⁾. "The enthusiasm that Wesley deprecated and the mysticism that he detested, Blake²⁾ found to be vital".

As for Scottish writers, Tobias Smollett, though smiling at Methodists, in the person of his simple Humphrey Clinker, shows quite intimate knowledge of their habits. He notes that John Wesley is preaching at Newcastle and at Glasgow, and that in the latter city, Lydia Melford's aunt, using her religion chiefly to acquire a husband, has been praying, preaching and catechising among the Methodists, with whom the country abounds. She pretends to have such "manifestations and revelations as even poor Clinker himself can hardly believe, though the poor fellow is crazy with enthusiasm"³⁾.

M. /

1) Wm. Cowper and the Eighteenth Century - p. 182-3 - G. Thomas.

2) p. 244, T.H. Shepherd - Methodism and the Literature of the Eighteenth Century.

3) Humphrey Clinker, p. 318.

M. Cazamian in his History of Literature remarks:-

"The bitter verve of Smollett is in its turn made more human¹⁾ by being brought into contact with Methodism".

Lastly, Lockhart himself, in the person of Matthew Wald, shows appreciation for the eloquence and personality of the great Whitefield, but deplores the melancholic emotion that Methodism inspires in sensitive and serious persons. "Whitefield was, as an orator, out of all sight superior to any thing my time, or yours either, has witnessed. The fervour, the passions, the storm of enthusiasm, spoke in every awful, yet melodious vibration of by far the finest human voice I have ever heard. Every note reverberated, clear as a silver trumpet, in the stillness of the evening atmosphere. A glorious sun, slowly descending in a sultry sky, threw a gleam of ethereal crimson over the man and the scene. The immense multitude sat, silent as the dead below them, while the hand of a consummate genius swept, as with the mastery of inspiration, every²⁾ chord of passion".

Lockhart calls the Revival an "endemic" that raged throughout the county. "The eternal visitations of wandering fanatics, some of them men of strong talents, and respectable acquirements, the far greater part ignorant, uninformed, wild, raving mechanics, - the enormous assemblages of people which the harangues of these persons never failed to command, even in the wildest and most thinly peopled districts of the country, - the scenes /

1) History of English Literature, p. 955, trans. by Emile Legouis.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 305.

scenes of, literally speaking, mere madness, which their enthusiastic and often impious declamations excited, and in which even the most eminent of them condescended to triumph, as the sure tests of the divinity of the peculiar dogmas which they enunciated, - these, and the subscriptions for schools, chapels, and I know not what - all to be under¹⁾ the control of the apostles of this perilous sect, - all these things spread and flourished in a style of which you can happily form but a slender conception".

Lockhart is on the side of Horace Walpole here, in deprecating excess, though his own literary career by no means shows this fastidiousness consistently. Perhaps there was a touch of the fine gentleman, even the snob about Lockhart as well, that scorned a creed that appealed to the masses; or perhaps his keen instinct for detecting poseurs was awakened, and he appears to us to be at his old game of tearing aside the veil. Certainly, there are always the hum-bugs, as well as the sincere converts attached to every new religious cult. Ironically enough, Wesley himself would have made the same criticism, for he censured Whitefield and Madan for "amorous and luscious" preaching, and attacked the mysticism of Swedenborg. In fact, Wesley was in the curious position of being out of sympathy with many movements, to which he himself unwittingly gave impetus. "He wished to reform and revitalize the Church of /

1) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 319.

of England, and he founded another and larger world Church. He believed in authority and held Tory views, but he founded the basis of the working class movement. His ideal of literature was Classicism and he prepared the way for Romanticism".¹⁾

Lockhart himself was bound to admit that many distinguished people were attached to the new evangelicalism "names, so universally, and, indeed, so deservedly venerable, that it must have been no easy matter to convince them, no very pleasant matter even to insinuate that they were all in the wrong".²⁾

The stage presentation of Methodists is such as is described in the Quarterly Review - 1810; they "had a physiognomy as the Jews or the gipsies - coarse hard and dismal visages as if some spirit of darkness had got into them and were looking out of them".³⁾ Smollett had noticed that the Methodists were in reality a happy people, but Lockhart chooses to regard the exception as the rule, and his picture of the Methodist ladies who hung round Matthew's wife, is not attractive.

Yet, as Andrew Lang says, there is a wild "Brontesque" quality about Matthew Wald, that recalls those strange spiritual adventures of which the Brontes read in the Methodist Magazine; adventures of men like Silas Todd, Samson Stainforth, John Haime and John Nelson.⁴⁾

"It /

1) Methodism and the Literature of the Eighteenth Century - T.B. Shepherd, p. 266.

2) The History of Matthew Wald, p. 319.

3) The Quarterly Review, 1810, p. 305.

4) The Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart, Vol. I, p. 347

"It was characteristic of Lockhart's peculiar individuality that wherever he was at all known, whether by man or woman, by poet or man of business of the world he touched the hidden chord of romance in all" writes Dean Milman in *The Times* =, December 9th, 1854. Romance is there in Matthew Wald behind the blind fury, the bitter, dark introspection of the hero, despite the chicanery and despicable meanness by which the man of law tricked him into betraying his deep love; it remains in his nature to the end and, to it, he is tragically faithful.

The touches of natural scenery and romantic idyll noticeable in Adam Blair are rarer in Matthew Wald, and although as Lang says the situation is Wordsworthian, heralded by a quotation from that poet, and coming quietly and gradually to a close at the evening of Matthew Wald's life, tranquillity is not associated with the novel in the reader's mind, but rather violence and stress and almost demonic energy. It is as if the novelist felt that he had no time to finish his work and tossed off fragments that promised greatness.

"No doubt he might have taken a higher place as a poet than by his Spanish Ballads, as a writer of fiction than by his novels. These seem to have been thrown off by a sudden uncontrollable impulse to relieve the mind of its fulness, rather than as works of finished art or mature study --- They were the flashes of a genius that would not be suppressed: none esteemed them more humbly than Lockhart".¹⁾

1) From "The Times" Dec. 9, 1854 - by Dean Milman quoted by A. Lang in *Life and Letters of J.G. Lockhart*, (p. 406)

CHAPTER V.

JAMES HOGG.

- I. The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, 1824. So powerful that Andrew Lang and Professor Saintsbury doubted Hogg's authorship. Treatment of the devil in realistic surroundings in line of Hogg's other weird tales, but this the culmination of the species. Facts concerning publication. Chief interest of tale-conflict of the sinner himself. Same moral atmosphere as depicted in the Memorials of the Rev. Robert Law (1638-84).
- II. Account of contents of "The Confessions of a Justified Sinner" by the Editor.
- III. Autobiography of the Sinner. Inset tale of Lucky Shaw.
- IV. Epilogue to the tale - Finding of the suicide's grave.
- V. Comparison with Lockhart. The Devil in Scottish Literature and Life.
- VI. Analogies in other literatures, e.g. Bunyan's - "The Life and Death of Mr Badman": Fielding's - "Jonathan Wyld". Comparison with R.L. Stevenson's - "Thrawn Janet", Sir Walter Scott's - "Wandering Willie's Tale". Nathaniel Hawthorne's - "The Scarlet Letter".
- VII. Tenets of faith expressed by Sinner.

- VIII. "The Brownie of Bodsbeck" compared with "Old Mortality" and "Ringan Gilhaize". The Brownie - not strictly historical, but belonging to "magic" literature. Scott's disapproval of distorted view of Government side. Hogg's background.
- IX. Account of the tale. Comparison of picture of Covenanters in "Old Mortality" "Ringan Gilhaize" and "The Brownie of Bodsbeck"; Hogg more interested in Border characters, i.e. Laidlaw the Shepherd; and the traditional view point. The Brownie. Character of Nanny admired by Scott. Character of Claverhouse.
- X. Hogg's Border Scots. Comparison with Wilson's "Tales of the Border".
- XI. Lockhart and Hogg's novels though Scottish in character represent taste of the time for morbid themes. Possible German influence on Lockhart: Hogg affected only by native influence - ballads and legends of the Border peasantry: Hogg deals in "magic"; Lockhart in psychology of strange natures. Terror elements in novels of both. Predecessors - Smollett and the German Hoffman, whose tales were known in Scotland at the time. Byronic elements in Lockhart's novels.

THE PRIVATE MEMOIRS AND CONFESSIONS OF A JUSTIFIED SINNER.1824.JAMES HOGG. (1770 - 1835)

The name of James Hogg can now be confidently appended as the author of this strange and terrifying tale. Yet, so startling and powerful a work of genius is it, that critics of standing like Andrew Lang and Professor Saintsbury found it hard to believe that the Ettrick Shepherd was capable of rising to, far less of sustaining such artistry.

Lockhart, they deduced, was the man who must at least have had a hand in it. We have Lockhart's own word for it, that he thought that only Hogg could edit his own tales, and in Hogg's life of Sir Walter Scott, we read that the latter advised Hogg against giving his tales to Lockhart to edit. -

"Before we parted, I mentioned to him my plan of trusting an edition of my prose tales, in twenty volumes, to Lockhart's editing. He disapproved of the plan decidedly." ¹⁾

Lockhart had already produced the two novels of the "terror" order, and the Confessions seemed to represent a blending of the two themes utilized in Adam Blair and Matthew Wald - terrible remorse aggravated by an extremist religion from the one, and the spiritual experiences of a man poised between lucidity and madness, from the other.

To /

1) Domestic Life and Manners of Sir Walter Scott, p. 134.

To those, a third subject was added in the Confessions, one peculiar to Scottish tradition, but treated here in an inimitable way, namely, the incarnation of the fiend in realistic surroundings.

Lang revoked his opinion, first propounded in the Illustrated London News, November 24th 1894, that Lockhart had at least assisted in the tale, in an article in the Athenaeum November 30th 1895, No. 3553.

'THE SUICIDE'S GRAVE'.

8 Gibson Place,
St. Andrews.

"I am unable to recover the impression that Lockhart's hand shows in Hogg's 'Justified Sinner' or 'Suicide's Grave'. The book appeared anonymously: Lockhart is mentioned, and Hogg is described among his paulies at Thirlestane Fair. Of course in recording my first impression, that Lockhart collaborated or assisted, I mean no suggestion against the literary honesty of the Shepherd, on which see the remarks as to literary supercheries attributed to Lockhart at the close of the 'Justified Sinner'. As far as internal or external evidence goes, I am now quite of Mrs Garden's opinion."

The lady above mentioned was Hogg's daughter, who possessed in 1898, the M.S. of the book in the Shepherd's own handwriting. This of course is not conclusive evidence of his authorship, for he lived in the age of mystification, when reviewers and authors alike, delighted in puzzling their reading public, and when /

when Hogg allowed himself to be impersonated by Christopher North and others as the bucolic Shepherd of the Noctes Ambrosianae. Nevertheless, the MS. carries weight, and Hogg certainly corrected the tale, under the title of "The Confessions of a Fanatic" before his death. In his "Autobiography", he tells us that it was first published anonymously; he dared not put his name to it for "it was a story replete with horrors."¹⁾

In his address to the illustrious gathering standing round the memorial erected to commemorate the birthplace of Hogg at Ettrickhall on 28th June, 1898, William Garden, the poet's son-in-law said:- "We have still the MS. of 'The Confessions of a Fanatic',²⁾ a prose composition of such singular power that some thought the Shepherd must have had assistance in its composition. Our having the MS. in our possession proved the contrary and that J. G. Lockhart, who it was thought might have helped, had no hand in the matter. The sole holder of this opinion now known to me is Professor Saintsbury. Had the Professor known Hogg as well as we do down here, he would have changed his opinion ere now. Hogg neither wished for nor required assistance."

As for the story itself, even allowing for the Garden's partiality, there is on it, the stamp of Hogg himself. Separate publication from Hogg's other tales is apt to set the Confessions apart as a separate genre; it is not so. Gil Martin, the friend, though head and shoulders above Hogg's other /

2) The Ettrick Shepherd Memorial, Volume p. 45. ed. by R. Borland, Selkirk

1) Autobiography - prefacing The Mountain Bard - consisting of Legendary Ballads and Tales - 1821 - James Hogg.

other bogles, witches and warlocks, is nevertheless of the same family as the "jottery man of the Black Hagsgs"¹⁾ the old Man of the Hunt of Eildon, the unknown swordsman who fights Adam Bell behind Holyrood.

The Confessions is undoubtedly a work of genius. Facts concerning the publication of the book are illuminating. Preceded by an article - "A Scots Mummy" - printed in Blackwood's Magazine Vol. xiv,²⁾ August 1823, which was reprinted almost verbatim in The Confessions, came the first edition of the book in 1824. -

The Private Memoirs
and Confessions
of a Justified Sinner

written by himself with a detail of curious traditionary facts and
other evidence by the editor

London

etc.

This edition was reprinted and acknowledged by Hogg, 1828, under the title of "The Suicide's Grave". Thereafter came an edition in 1837 with omissions and alterations and a title calculated to mollify the pious, given as a justification of the theme. "The Confessions of a Fanatic". In this edition, the tale is closer knit because of three omissions, but the passages left out, though loosely connected with the main narrative, have a quality, which must have made Hogg, their author, usually the least critical of his own work, very loath /

1) The Tales of J. Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, London, 1836.

2) pp. 158-190

loath to part with them. .Some of the longest passages omitted are John Barnet's account of Robert Colman's parents, Penpunt's reflections on Cameronian principles, and Lucky Shaw's story of the narrow escape of the people of Auchtermuchty from the devil.

In 1865, the Rev. T. Thomson included the Fanatic in his edition of the Works of the Ettrick Shepherd; and it was not until 1895 that the book appeared in its original form, but under the title of "The Suicide's Grave", the name, which Hogg had found suitable, when he acknowledged it in 1828.

Under the Campion reprints No. 1.(1924), the novel appears at last under its own colours, with the original text and title, and an introduction by T. Earle Welby.

In his criticism, the latter remarks that "Defoe¹⁾ never did anything with more convincing particularity", and certainly the way in which the Shepherd seems to have set about the tale is reminiscent of the earlier writer's documentary manner. It is curious that the mainspring of the tale, i.e. the letter, "A Scots Mummy"²⁾ contributed by Hogg to Blackwood's Magazine, should have been published separately in 1823. Whether or not Hogg had a complete plan for the Confessions at that time, it is not possible to ascertain, but the gruesome theme attracted him and is adumbrated in "The Brownie of the Black Hags" and in "The Strange Letter of a Lunatic;" the fullest and most powerful treatment of the theme is reserved however for the Confessions.

"The /

1) Introduction to The Confessions, p. 8.

2) Blackwood's Magazine, Vol. xiv. pp. 188-190.

"The Strange Letter of a Lunatic" describing the excavation of a suicide's grave "where the lands of three proprietors meet all at one point",¹⁾ is printed almost fully at the end of the Confessions, as an epilogue, what precedes the letter and subsequent discussion by the anonymous editor are firstly, the Editor's Narrative, and secondly, the Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, Written by Himself, and broken off at the point of death.

The chief interest in the tale is centred in the figure of the Sinner himself, fit agent and victim of the devil because of his ability and spiritual arrogance. For the reader, there is the same horrified fascination in reading his Confessions as in perusing the pages of "Satan's Invisible World by Mr. George Sinclair, or the anecdotes of the Rev. Mr. Robert Law anent witchcraft; the same ardent self-delusion appears in all the poor crazed ones "dilated of witchcraft",²⁾ but there is a sombre power about the doomed Robert Colwan's narrative usually absent from the naïve outpourings of those afflicted by the "devill" - a "devill" who was particularly active in 16th and 17th century Scotland, taking advantage, no doubt, of the religious and political upheavals of the time to work his own mischief.

1) The Confessions, p.272

2) Memorials or The Momorable Things that Fell out Within this island of Brittain from 1638-84. ed. by C.K. Share, Edin. 1818. by Rev. Robert Law.

III

The "Confessions" begins in the Editor's Narrative with a description of the Border family of Colwan in the year 1687, when George of that name, succeeded his uncle in the lands of Dalchastel and Balgrennan. This George in later life married "the sole heiress and reputed daughter of a Bailie Orde of Glasgow,"¹⁾ an unfortunate alliance from the start owing to the temperament of both parties. The laird was known to his country neighbours as a "droll careless chap"²⁾ (the turn of phrase is unmistakably Hogg's own) with a very limited proportion of the fear of God in his heart and very nearly as little of the fear of man:- "He had hitherto believed that he was living on most cordial terms with the greater part of the inhabitants of the earth, and with the powers above in particular: but woe be unto him if he was not soon convinced of the fallacy of such damning security! for his lady was the most severe and gloomy of all bigots to the principles of the Reformation."³⁾

There then follows a curious use of the word "unguent"- a wrong use which betrays the Shepherd's unlettered youth:-

"Hers were not the tenets of the great reformers but theirs mightily overstrained and deformed. Theirs was an unguent hard to be swallowed; but hers was that unguent embittered and overheated until nature could not longer bear it. She imbibed /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions p.11. (ed. Welby)

2) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, p.12.

3) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, p.12.

imbibed her ideas from the doctrines of one flaming predestinarian and divine alone; and these were so rigid that they became a stumbling block to many of his brethren, and a mighty handle for the enemies of his party to turn the machine of the State against them."

Thereafter follows a jocose description of the early married life of the laird and his lady, reminiscent of the high spirits of the Shepherd himself at Border gatherings of conviviality, sports, weddings and tavern greetings, and having something of the humour and atmosphere of a Burns anecdote.

"The wedding festivities at Dalcastle partook of all the gaiety, not of that stern age, but of one previous to it. There was feasting, dancing, piping, and singing: the liquors were handed around in great fulness, the ale in large wooden bickers, and the brandy in capacious horns of oxen. The laird gave full scope to his homely glee. He danced - he snapped his fingers to the music - clapped his hands and shouted at the turn of the tune. He saluted every girl in the hall whose appearance was anything tolerable, and requested of their sweethearts to take the same freedom with his bride by way of retaliation. But there she sat at the head of the hall in still and blooming beauty, absolutely refusing to tread a single measure with any gentleman there."¹⁾

Sir David Wilkie or perhaps a Dutchman in Pieter Breughel's manner could do justice to the scene, but it would need Hogarth to paint the new Mrs Colman turning away her head /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of Justified Sinner. p.13.

head with disgust or looking "with pity and contempt towards the old inadvertent sinner, capering away in the height of his¹⁾ unregenerated mirth."

A subtle onlooker at the festivities was the minister, who "perceived the workings of her pious mind, and thenceforward addressed her by the courteous title of Lady Dalcastle, which sounded somewhat better, as not coupling her name with one of²⁾ the wicked."

After accusing her spouse of various heathenish sports, including "promiscuous" dancing - a sin that ever thrilled the godly in eighteenth century Scotland with horror and indignation,³⁾ the lady Dalcastle departed from "the man of Belial" on the next day and sought refuge in the house of her father, the Bailie in Glasgow. The Bailie however was a shrewd man, and though "he had acquiesced in his wife's asservation regarding the likeness of their only daughter to her father, he never loved or admired her greatly; therefore this behaviour nothing astounded⁴⁾ him."

"Aye, aye, Raby! An' sae I find that Dalcastle has actually refused to say prayers with you when you ordered him; an' has guidit you in a rude indelicate manner, outstepping the respect due to my daughter - as my daughter. But wi' regard to what is due to his own wife, of that he's a better judge nor me. However, since he has behaved in that manner to my daughter, I shall /

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. P.13.

2) Do. do. p. 13.

3) do. do. p. 18.

4) do. do. p. 19.

shall be revenged on him for aince; for I shall return the obligation to ane nearer to him: that is, I shall take pennyworths¹⁾ of his wife - an' let him lick at that."

Thereupon the worthy Bailie serves her in the time-honoured fashion of the Wee Cooper o' Fife, belabouring her in the person of Mrs Colwan, for the affronts afforded by the Laird to her, as Bailie Ord's daughter. As he had intended Mrs Colman "was aften driven to sit at her casement and look out²⁾ for the approach of the heathenish Laird of Dalcastle."

The tardy laird eventually arrived and a truce was patched up between them. However, they were not long back at Dalcastle when "she would convert the laird in spite of his teeth: the laird would not be converted." "He also dared to doubt of the great standard doctrine of absolute predestination,³⁾ which, put the crown on the lady's Christian resentment." This was a fatal stumbling-block as was afterwards proved.

Relations between them became so strained after six months" altercation, that "the arrangements of the separation were amicably adjusted" and the lady agreed to occupy the third storey of the old mansion-house, from which eminence she watched with suspicion and aversion the laird's callers and particularly one lady of good and respectable family called Miss Logan.

"Who is that fat bouncing dame that visits the laird so often, and always by herself?" said she to her maid Martha one⁴⁾ day.

"Oh /

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- 1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p. 19.
 2) Do. do. do. p. 21.
 3) do. do. do. p. 21.
 4) do. do. do. p. 22.

"Oh dear, mem, how can I ken? We're vanished frae our acquaintances here, as weel as frae the sweet gospel ordinances."

"Find me out who that jolly dame is, Martha. You who hold communion with the household of this ungodly man, can be at no loss to attain this information" -----

"Martha's information turned out of that nature that prayers were said in the uppermost storey of Dalcastle house against the Canaanitish woman, every night and every morning; and great discontent prevailed there even to anathema and tears, Letter after letter was dispatched to Glasgow and at length, to the lady's great consolation the Rev. Mr. Wringhim arrived safely and devoutly in her elevated sanctuary.¹⁾"

Night after night they sat up to argue the points of doctrine.

"To the wicked, all things are wicked; but to the just, all things are just and right."²⁾

"Ah, that is a sweet and comfortable saying, Mr. Wringhim! How delightful to think that a justified person can do no wrong! Who would not envy the liberty wherewith we are made free? Go to my husband, that poor unfortunate, blindfolded person, and open his eyes to his degenerate and sinful state; for well are you fitted to the task."

"Yea, I will go unto him, and confound him. I will lay hold the strongholds of sin and Satan as flat before my face /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, p.23

2) Do. Do. Do. Do. p. 24.

face as the dung that is spread out to fatten the land."

Thus spite and jealousy from the lady and sanctimonious hypocrisy from the minister united pleasurably to call forth in Old Testament language a ringing denunciation of the laird and his association with Miss Logan.

Dalcastle was honestly indignant at the hypocrite whose canting sophistry disguised even from himself his carnal wishes and deeds.

"You are one, Sir, whose righteousness consists in splitting the doctrines of Calvin into thousands of undistinguishable films, and in setting up a system of justifying-grace against all breaches of all laws, moral or divine. In short, Sir, you are a mildew, - a canker-worm in the bosom of the Reformed Church, generating a disease of which she will never be purged, but by the shedding of blood. Go thou in peace, and do these abominations no more; but humble thyself, lest a worse reproof come upon thee."¹⁾

The tirade ended in the laird appointing Miss Logan as his housekeeper.

In time, the Lady Dalcastle had two sons, one fine lad, George, and the other, Robert, whom the Laird was loth to acknowledge as of his flesh and blood. Certainly the dispositions of the two boys differed remarkably.

"George was brought up with his father, and educated partly /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, p. 26.

partly at the parish school, and partly at home, by a tutor, hired for the purpose. He was a generous and kind-hearted youth; always ready to oblige, and hardly ever dissatisfied with anybody. Robert was brought up with Mr Wringhim, the laird paying a certain allowance for him yearly; and there the boy was early inured to all the sternness and severity of the pastor's arbitrary and unyielding creed."¹⁾

Any aversion he might have had for his father and brother George was nourished so that it became an enduring hate, by the daily denunciations of the minister; he prayed:- "that the old hoary sinner might be cut off in the full flush of his iniquity, and be carried quick into hell; and that that young stem of the corrupt trunk might also be taken from a world that he degraded, but that his sins might be pardoned, because he knew no better."²⁾

This was the language of damnation, but the prayers of Calvin reserved for the elect were even more terrible.

"He was taught to pray twice every day, and seven times on Sabbath days; but he was only to pray for the elect, and, like David of old, doom all that were aliens from God to destruction."³⁾

As a result of his upbringing, Robert was a cold, stern, but clever boy, - acute, an excellent learner had ardent and ungovernable passions, and, withal, a sternness of demeanour from which other boys shrunk. He was the best grammarian, the best /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p.30
 2) Do. Do. Do. Do. p.30
 3) do. do. do. do. p.30

best reader, writer and accountant in the various classes that he attended, and was fond of writing essays on controverted points of theology, for which he got prizes, and great praise from his guardian and mother. George was much behind him in scholastic acquirements, but greatly his superior in personal prowess, form, feature, and all that constitutes gentility in the deportment and appearance."¹⁾

During boyhood, the lads rarely, if ever, met, to the satisfaction of their respective guardians, but, "as they advanced towards manhood, this became impracticable."²⁾ The laird who had originally favoured the Covenanting in secret, having had some experience of the bitterness of the extremists in his own household, sought to free his son George from such pernicious influence and packed the lady off to Glasgow, much to her pleasure.

At that time, under the influence of the Earls of Seafield and Tullibardine, the laird "was returned" for a Member of Parliament in the famous session that sat at Edinburgh when the Duke of Queensberry was commissioner."³⁾ The capital was seething with party spirit - the Whig faction versus the High Church and Cavalier party.

George Colwan accompanied his father, the laird, to court, and from Glasgow there came thither also, Mr Wringhim and Robert.

Wringhim was a great favourite "with some of the west country /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p. 30.
 2) Do. Do. Do. Do. p. 31.
 3) do. do. do. do. p. 31.

country gentlemen of that faction by reason of his unbending impudence. No opposition could for a moment cause him either to blush, or retract one item that he had advanced. Therefore the Duke of Argyll and his friends made such use of him as sportsmen often do of terriers, to start the game, and make a great yelping noise to let them know whether the chase is proceeding" "But he was sometimes likewise of real use to the heads of the Presbyterian faction, and therefore was admitted to their tables, and of course conceived himself a very great man.¹⁾"

The first meeting of the brothers Colwan occurred at a tennis match; it was a strange and fateful encounter. George was distinguishing himself by his agility and skill, when both he himself and his friends were forced to notice a newcomer, whose persistent mockery and attempts to hinder the match, provoked them. They beheld "a lad with black clothes and a methodistical face, whose countenance and eye" they "disliked exceedingly".... "That was all the notice he took of him the first time they two met, But the next day, and every succeeding one, the same devilish-looking youth attended him as constantly as his shadow; was always in his way as with intention to impede him, and ever and anon his deep and malignant eye met those of his elder brother with a glance so fierce that it sometimes startled him."²⁾

His attentions at every place of sport became after this /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p. 31.

2) Do. Do. Do. Do. p. 33.

this so embarrassing and odious, that George after an outburst, when he denied that they could be brothers of the same father, had perforce to strike the offending Robert with his racquet.

After the play when the young men had recourse to an inn, the Black Bull, for supper, the bleeding and offensive Robert, who had pursued them, was turned from the doors. He managed to raise an outcry which brought a hooting mob round the tavern. To keep the peace, the landlord sent for two officers, who carried young Robert to the guard-house, whence his guardian, having raised a storm over the matter at the Whig council, got permission to release him.

On seeing the disgusting plight of Robert, Wringhim presented his ward to his honourable patrons, "and in a very short time thereafter, everyone in the room was up, talking with the utmost vociferation, all on the same subject, and all taking the same side in the debate.¹⁾"

"In the midst of this confusion, someone or other issued from the house, which was at the back of the Canongate, calling out: 'A plot, a plot! Treason, treason! Down with the bloody incendiaries at the Black Bull!'"²⁾

A ludicrous episode subsequently followed, for there were two parties at the Black Bull, one Whig and the other Cavalier, who, not knowing that they each represented different colours, sallied forth together to meet the attackers.

"The investigation disclosed nothing, the effect of which was not ludicrous; and the Duke of Queensberry, whose aim was /

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p. 38
 2) Do. Do. Do. p.39.

was at that time to conciliate the two factions, tried all that he could to turn the whole fracas into a joke - an unlucky frolic, where no ill was meant on either side, and which yet had been productive of a great deal".¹⁾

But the persecution of George by his brother Robert was no "joke" - no "unlucky frolic"; George found himself becoming very unpopular, for wherever he appeared in public with his friends the unwelcome figure of Robert was ever in attendance - "a fiend of more malignant aspect was ever at his elbow, in the form of his brother."²⁾

Hogg then describes the peculiar horror of the looks with which Robert favours his brother. "To whatever place of amusement he betook himself, and however well he concealed his intentions of going there from all flesh living, there was his brother Wringhim also, and always within a few yards of him, generally about the same distance, and ever and anon darting looks at him that chilled his very soul. They were looks that cannot be described; but they were felt piercing to the bosom's deepest core. They affected even the onlookers in a very particular manner, for all whose eyes caught a glimpse of these hideous glances followed them to the object towards which they were darted: the gentlemanly and mild demeanour of that object generally calmed their startled apprehensions; for no one ever yet noted the glances of the young man's eye, in the black coat, at the face of his brother, who did not at first manifest strong symptoms of alarm."³⁾

One /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p. 44.
 2) DO. Do. Do. Do. p. 49
 3) do. do. do. do. p. 49

One aspect of this persecution particularly worried George - "this unaccountable being knew all his motions, and every intention of his heart, as it were intuitively." ¹⁾ Even ²⁾ when "the caprice of a moment had carried him there," - the unfortunate young laird was afflicted by that implacable gaze ³⁾ of a pair of dark stern eyes. "By night and day it was the same." In whatever places a young man of mettle and fashion might frequent in old Edinburgh, the figure of this brother cast a shadow. "In the gallery of the Parliament House, in the boxes of the play-house, in the church, in the assembly, in the streets, suburbs, and the fields; and every day, and every hour, from the first rencounter of the two, the attendance became more and more constant, more inexplicable, and altogether more alarming and insufferable, until at last George was fairly driven from society, and forced to spend his days in his and his father's lodgings with closed doors." ⁴⁾

From this point onwards, the reader gains an impression of mounting terror, for with George, the persecution has entered a new phase. Driven from his rightful resorts of exercise, the young laird feels the net closing round him; his imagination is now preyed upon fearfully and he wonders if the attendance of his brother is not like that of "a demon or some devoted being that had sold himself to destruction, his approaches as undiscerned, ⁵⁾ and his looks as fraught with hideous malignity."

Now /

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| 1.) | The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner | p. 49 |
| 2) | " " " " " | p. 50 |
| 3) | " " " " " | p. 51 |
| 4) | " " " " " | p. 51. |
| 5) | " " " " " | p. 51. |

Now Hogg, with amazing penetration, portrays how deeply the strange persecution eats into the laird's consciousness, changing what had been embarrassment into superstitious terror. One morning, young George, "arose to make an excursion to the top of Arthur's Seat, to breathe the breeze of the dawning and see the sun arise out of the eastern ocean." The setting for this adventure is described in detail; place-names and persons give an air of realism to the account; The Canongate, the Palace, the Lord Commissioner's house, the guards, who warn the young man that the gates of Holyrood will be shut and guarded for an hour and advise him to go by the back of St. Anthony's garden, all have their significance as in a tale by Defoe. The palace inmates are asleep, therefore the hero must sidetrack¹⁾ into that little romantic glade adjoining to the saint's chapel," where at once the atmosphere changes.

"He was still involved in a blue haze like a dense smoke, but yet in the midst of it, the respiration was the most refreshing and delicious. The grass and the flowers were laden with dew; and, on taking off his hat to wipe his forehead, he perceived that the black glossy fur of which his chaperon was wrought was all covered with a tissue of the most delicate silver - a fairy web, composed of little spheres, so minute that no eye could discern any of them; yet there they were shining in lovely millions. Afraid of defacing so beautiful and so delicate a garnish, he replaced his hat with the greatest²⁾ caution, and went on his way light of heart."

The /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p. 53
 2) " " " " p. 53.

The freshness of this and the subsequent description of the panorama round Arthur's Seat, take the reader to the bright, dewy world, the glen through which walks Kilmeny the pure:-

"where the Yorlin sings, where grows
the cress flower round the spring;
the scarlet hypp and the hindberrye,
And the nut that hangs frae the hazel tree."

When George reached the top of Arthur's Seat, the radiance of the morning did not depart. The sun's morning rays refracted by the dense vapour round the hill's foot, broke into a pale rainbow, called by the shepherd boys - "the little
1) wee ghost of a rainbow."

George felt free and happy. "Here" thought he, "I can converse with nature without disturbance and without being
2) intruded by any appalling or obnoxious visitor."

"The idea of his brother's dark and malevolent looks coming at that moment across his mind, he turned his eyes instinctively to the right, to the point where that unwelcome guest was wont to make his appearance. Gracious Heaven! He saw delineated in the cloud, the shoulders, arms and features
3) of a human being of the most dreadful aspect." This was a monstrous impression of his brother, dark eyes gleaming on him through the mist, "while every furrow of its hideous brow frowned
4) deep as the ravines on the brow of the hill," like Milton's Satan with brows entrenched with thunder."

"..and yet there was fear and trembling in these unearthly /

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| 1) | The Memoirs and Confessions of A Justified Sinner | p. 54 |
| 2) | " " " " | p. 55 |
| 3) | " " " " | p. 55 |
| 4) | " " " " | p. 55 |

unearthly features, as plainly depicted as murdering malice." The thing made as if to spring upon him whereupon George turning to flee precipitally collided with a "real body of flesh and blood,"¹⁾ so that both rolled down some scragged rocks.

The other, of course, was brother Robert, who fled up the hill, bawling - "murder", pursued by George, who extracted from him the information that a "friend" always reported the whereabouts of George and that he haunted George, only for his own good. Trembling, with nose bleeding profusely, Robert presented a disgusting and contemptible appearance, but, once assured that the generous George had no thoughts of revenge, the poltroon sprang up and assumed - "his former insolence and revengeful looks, and never were they more dreadful than on parting with his brother that morning on the top of the hill. 'Well, go thy way', said George; 'some would despise, but I pity thee. If thou are not a limb of Satan, I never saw one'".²⁾

The above encounter is one of the most striking passages in the book. Hogg shows here poetic feeling and artistic propriety, not only in the apparition, but in the beautiful setting and skilful creation of atmosphere - the chill mist from which was evolved the wicked geni, the projection of an imagination fearfully haunted.

As a result of the morning's misadventure and through the machinations of Wringhim, George was "apprehended and lodged in jail, on a criminal charge of an assault to the shedding of blood /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner p. 55

2) " " " " p. 59

blood with the intent of committing fratricide."¹⁾

His father, old Dalcastle, now perceived that he had treated George's account of the meeting with his brother too lightly and all his influence with the noblemen and lawyers of his party was brought to bear to release his son.

The Sheriff, who was a Whig, remanded George to prison, leaving the matter to the High Court of Justiciary. Eventually after the evidence had been sifted, "George was handsomely acquitted and young Wringhim bound over to keep the peace with heavy penalties and securities."²⁾

To celebrate his freedom, young George and his youthful associates dined once more at the Black Bull of Norway and thence repaired, full of glee to a bagnio situated "on the opposite side of the street to the Black Bull Inn, a little farther to the eastward."³⁾

Here, George and a young nobleman, Drummond had some altercation, whereupon Drummond left the house in displeasure.. Some time after this, a sharp rap came to the door. George was summoned, "instantly rose from the side of one of them, and said, in the hearing of them all, 'I will bet a hundred merks that is Drummond' - 'Don't go to quarrel with him, George,' said one - 'Bring him in with you,' said another. George stepped out; the door was again bolted, the chain drawn across, and the inadvertent party left within, thought no more of the circumstance till the morning, that the report had spread over the city that a young gentleman had been slain, on a little washing-green at the side of the North Loch, and at the very bottom of the close where /

1)	The Memoirs and Confessions of A Justified Sinner	p. 62
2)	" " " "	p. 64
3)	" " " "	p. 66

where this thoughtless party had been assembled." ¹⁾

Although Drummond managed to escape, aided by his powerful kinsmen, he was "pronounced guilty of the murder, outlawed for not appearing and a high reward offered for his apprehension." ²⁾ The whole episode provided "a pulpit theme" throughout Scotland.

George's father became a changed and stricken man after his son's death and soon followed him to the grave, despite the efforts of the faithful Miss Logan. To his last moment, he did not believe that Thomas Drummond was the murderer of his son.

"It was all a mistake, a gross and fatal error; but God, who had permitted such a flagrant deed, would bring it to light in his own time and way." ³⁾

Robert Wringhim after this, took possession of the estates of Dalcastle. The investiture was celebrated by prayer, singing of psalms, and religious disputation," Wringhim, denouncing "all men and women to destruction" and then holding out "hopes to his adherents that they were the chosen few, included in the promises, and who could never fall away." "It would appear that this pharisaical doctrine is a very delicious one, and the most grateful of all others to the worst characters." ⁴⁾

George Colwan and his father left a faithful friend behind them in the person of Miss Logan, who, sensing that some dreadful mystery lay behind her young master's tragic death set about gathering information, fixing her suspicions chiefly on her /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p. 67.
 2) " " " " p. 69
 3) " " " " p. 70
 4) / " / " / " p. 70

her greatest enemy, Mrs Colwan, now the Lady Dowager of Dalcastle. One evening, on her return from a convocation of family servants, from whom she had been extracting information, she found that her house had been burgled and that a number of valuable articles had been stolen.

A few days later, she was summoned to Peebles to survey her stolen articles, make an affidavit to the Sheriff and prosecute the thief.

On entering the town by the North Gate, she was accosted by a ragged girl, who begged her to visit her mother - the prisoner in the Tolbooth, who had "something of the greatest moment to impart to her."¹⁾ The woman proved to be one, Bell Calvert, an adventuress, who at first begged for her life; Miss Logan being struck with a remark about the Colwans, discovered that the prisoner was in the vicinity on the night of George's murder, but as she had offended the woman's high spirit, she could get no information from her.

"No, Mrs Calvert, you and I part not till you have divulged that mystery to me."

"You must accompany me to the other world, then, for you shall not have it in this."²⁾

Miss Logan subsequently followed the prisoner to court in Edinburgh, where the good lady and her pert maid, Bessie Gillies were compelled by the prosecutor for the Crown, to appear. Hogg gives an amusing Hogarthian sketch of this girl, Bessie Gillies, with her racy tongue, being questioned by the depute-advocate.

Legal /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner p.73

2) " " " " p. 77

Legal Edinburgh naturally furnished rich material for novelists, and was a significant feature of the Scottish scene. It is characteristic that the petty Scots novelists like Galt, Hogg and Lockhart should use the ~~tragi~~-comedy of the Law Courts for inset satirical sketches, and that it was left to Sir Walter Scott to give the theme its full scope in the human drama of Redgauntlet, and to treat it in all its aspects, with the breadth and power that the subject demands.

However, torches have their use as well as searchlights, and it was the function of the petty Scots novelists to filter light through the unexplored paths of the Scottish scene rather than to illuminate all with the steady refulgence of the Waverley Novels.

To return to Bessie Gillies in the Law Court! "What passed, say ye? O, there wasna muckle: I was in a great passion, but she was dung doitrified a wee. When she gaed to put the key i' the door, up it flew to the fer wa! 'Bess ye, jaud, what's the meaning o' this?' quo she. 'Ye hae left the door open, ye tawpie!' quo she. 'The ne'er o' that I did,' quo I, 'or
1) may my shakel bane never turn another key'."

Bessie's shrewd native wit does not forsake her, when she is asked to identify the stolen articles. Of the silver spoons, she remarks that they "are marked wi' her ain name, an' I
2) hae little doubt they are hers, an' that she has seen better days."

"Ah, God bless her heart!" sighed the prisoner; and that blessing was echoed in the breathings of many a feeling breast."

Mrs /

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| 1) | Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner | p. 81. |
| 2) | " " " | p. 83 |

Mrs Logan refused to prosecute, and the prisoner was acquitted.

A few days later a caddy (familiar sight in old Edinburgh) came with a large parcel to Mrs Logan's house, which he delivered, along with a sealed note from Bell Calvert, craving admittance. To this request, Miss Logan joyfully acceded, and after a recital of her unhappy life, the woman confessed that she had conversation with Thomas Drummond on the night of George Colwan's murder; that he had left her with some money to relieve her distress, and that at the moment of his departure, a strange "new spark"¹⁾ had come running violently into the house. Despite this interruption, Bell Calvert, from the casement of her room watched Drummond "going eastward in his tartans and bonnet, and the gilded hilt of his claymore glittering in the moon; and at the very same time, I saw two men, the one in black, and the other likewise in tartans, coming towards the steps from the opposite bank, by the foot of the loch; and I²⁾ saw Drummond and they eyeing each other as they passed."

Thus Bell Calvert, the witness, solemnly testifies as though in court, and her detailed evidence, Miss Logan - and the reader, breathlessly await, for the earnest manner of the teller, and the clear-cut scene, prepare us for something, we partly expect, partly dread.

When the two strangers came below the window, the watcher noticed that - "one of them was extremely like Drummond." "I was certain it was not he because I had seen the one going and the /

1)Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner

p.89

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p.89.

the other approaching at the same time, and my impression at the moment was that I looked upon some spirit or demon, in his likeness. I felt a chillness creep all round my heart." ¹⁾

Bound in horrid fascination, Bell Calvert, saw the man in tartan signal to her, saw him push his friend, clad in black into a nearby wynd. Next, came the incident of the murder - George Colwan's emergence from the inn; his challenge from the kilted swordsman, whom he, too, took for Drummond: the brilliant swordplay round the green, the manoeuvring of George Colwan so that his back was to the black wynd, the fatal sword thrusts from the assassin in the close; the young laird's death cry:-

"Oh, dog of hell, it is you who has done this."

These facts, attested by Bell Calvert had never been brought to light, for the poor adventuress had fallen under the influence of the man who had taken refuge in her room, a malefactor, who had every good reason for keeping out of court, and who had finally turned King's evidence against Bell.

Persuaded by Mrs Logan, Bell sets off with her to the country near Dalcastle, to identify the murderer. They put up at an inn, from one of the windows of which, they behold Robert Colwan and a fine young man come walking by. "As the two passed, the latter looked up and made a sly signal to the two dames, ²⁾ biting his lip, winking with his left eye, and nodding his head."

At the sight, Miss Logan is stricken and falls senseless to the ground. On her recovery, she confides to her companion, that /

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner.
2) " " "

p.90.
p.98.

that the upstanding figure they had seen pass with the miserable Robert, was no other than that of the murdered George Colwan.

Next day, the two women, disguised as hawkers, determine to go up to the Hall; on their way there, they see the two young men approaching, and so they hide behind some bushes in the Bogle-heuch. The enigmatical one, who so strangely resembles George Colwan, makes his companion pass to and fro in front of the bushes, behind which the two trembling women cower, while Wringhim disputes the boundlessness of the true Christian's freedom, and expresses doubts, "that, chosen as he knew he was from all eternity, still it might be possible for him to commit acts that would exclude him from the limits of the covenant."¹⁾ The other argued, "with mighty fluency, that the thing was utterly impossible, and altogether inconsistent with eternal predestination."²⁾

Having silenced his companion on this point, "to the women's utter surprise, as the conquering disputant passed, he made a signal of recognizance through the brambles to them, as formerly, and that he might expose his associate fully, in his true colours, he led him backwards and forwards by the women more than twenty times, making him confess both the crimes that he had done and those he had in contemplation."³⁾ Next, with a queer, monkeyish humour, he drew Robert's attention towards the women hidden in the bushes, and left suddenly. Wringhim, attacking Mrs Logan furiously, was in turn handled by Bell Calvert, and when /

1)	Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner	p. 103
2)	" " "	p. 104
3)	" " "	p. 104

when the spiteful wretch was at their mercy - "You are liars and witches!" said he, foaming with rage, "and creatures fitted from the beginning for eternal destruction. I'll have your bones and your blood sacrificed on your cursed altars! O Gil - Martin! Gil - Martin! Where art thou now? Here, here, is the proper food for blessed vengeance. Helloa!"¹⁾

The women, having bound him, finally left the creature howling his threats, and hastened off to Edinburgh, where they divulged all their information to Lord Craigie, kinsman of the unhappy Drummond.

Their evidence, along with that of the man who had seen "the whole transaction along with Mrs Calvert," having been sifted, officers were sent to "apprehend the present Laird of Dalcastle, and bring him to trial".²⁾ "I never in my life saw any human being," said Mrs Calvert, "whom I thought so like a fiend. If a demon could inherit flesh and blood, the youth is precisely such a being, as I could conceive that demon to be. The depth and the malignity of his eye is hideous. His breath is like the airs from a charnel house, and his flesh seems fading from his bones, as if the worm that never dies were gnawing it away already."³⁾

In the mansion of Dalcastle however, all was deserted. Of Robert Wringhim Colwan and his mother, there was no trace to be found.

1)	Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner	p.107
2)	" " "	p.110
3)	" " "	p.108

III

Thus ends the editor's narrative with the remarks:-

"I have now the pleasure of presenting my readers with an original document of a most singular nature, and preserved for their perusal in a still more singular manner. I offer no remarks on it, and make as few additions to it, leaving everyone to judge for himself. We have heard much of the rage of fanaticism in former days, but nothing to this."¹⁾

The singular document proves to be "The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, Written by Himself;" and comprising the second part of this extraordinary tale.

At once, there is evidence of a striking change in tone - this is the language of the elect brethren. "I will let the wicked of this world know what I have done in the faith of the promises and justification by grace that they may read and tremble, and bless their gods of silver and gold that the minister of Heaven was removed from their sacrifices."²⁾

In his own person then, Robert Colwan commences to recount his life; his saintly upbringing by his Mother and Wringhim under the roof of the laird and his "reprobate heir";³⁾ the fulsome diet of catechism and prayers of vengeance with which his cold spirit was nourished, while Wringhim wrestled with his God to gain admittance for Robert as one of the elect. As a youth, Robert Colwan was wretchedly conscious of "a load of original transgressions pressing on me that is enough to crush me to the lowest /

1)	Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner	p.111
2)	" " " "	p.115
3)	" " " "	p.117

lowest hell;¹⁾" yet he daily added to the load with deceit and misdeeds.

His father's serving-man, John Barnet, was the only one of those surrounding him who doubted the young man's religious propensities, and in his vigorous Scots tongue condemned "sickan sublime and ridiculous sophistry,"²⁾ suggesting, "with most provoking grin"³⁾, that he had never heard such "come out of another mouth but ane," and adding as a parting shaft, that relieves the reader's feelings as well - "You made to honour and me to dishonour! Dirty low-kail thing that thou be'st!"

"I will have the old rascal on the hip for this, if I live,"⁴⁾ vowed Robert, and, immediately reporting the incident to the Rev. Wringhim, obtained the dismissal of the unrepentant John.

After this, Robert went on sinning without measure; but I was still more troubled about the multitude than the magnitude of my transgressions, and the small minute ones puzzled me more than those that were more heinous, as the latter had generally some good effects in the ways of punishing wicked men, forward boys, and deceitful women; and I rejoiced, even then in my early youth, at being used as a scourge in the hand of the Lord: another John, a Cyrus, or a Nebuchadnezzar."⁵⁾

By persistent lying to his schoolmaster, Robert contrives to have a clever and gifted boy, his opponent, twice expelled, "believing in the momentous and magnificent truth that, the more heavily /

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| 1) | Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. | p.118. |
| 2) | " " " | p.120 |
| 3) | " " " | p.120 |
| 4) | " " " | p.120 |
| 5) | " " " | p.126 |

heavily loaden with transgressions, the more welcome was the believer at the throne of grace."¹⁾

Thus gradually Robert Colwan nears the climax of his tale, faithfully perverse according to his creed, constantly sinning, just as constantly justifying his sins, until, one morning the Rev. Wringhim announced that "years of wrestling with God as the patriarch of old had done,"²⁾ had prevailed, and that "earnestly desired assurance of my acceptance with the Almighty, in and through the merits and sufferings of his Son" had been gained. His "reverend father" welcomed him "into the community of the just upon earth"; his mother - "into the society of the just made perfect."³⁾

The height of spiritual arrogance had been reached. "An exultation of spirit lifted me, as it were, far above the earth and the sinful creatures crawling on its surface; and I deemed myself an eagle among the children of men, soaring on high, and looking down with pity and contempt on the grovelling creatures below."⁴⁾

At this very crisis of his career with his name "written in the Lamb's book of life", a justified person, adopted among the number of God's children, and unable to be thrust from the saintly communion by an "by-past transgressions"⁵⁾ or future act either of his own or of other men, he is suddenly joined by "a young man of mysterious appearance". No more detailed picture is given of this stranger, who thus unaccountably enters Robert's life; his very anonymity is terrifying.

"As /

1)	Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner.	p. 133
2)	"	p.134
3)	"	p.134
4)	"	p.135.
5)	"	p.136

"As we approached each other, our eyes met, and I can never describe the strange sensations that thrilled through my whole frame at that impressive moment."¹⁾

Gradually, to his astonishment, Robert discovers that the other resembles him in appearance to a remarkable extent, and that he holds the same cherished belief in redemption by faith and not by good works. Though his deference charmed Robert, yet, "I stood in a sort of awe of him, which I could not account for, and several times was seized with an involuntary inclination to escape."²⁾ This impulse to flee, the stranger always seemed to anticipate and he soothed the nervous Colwan by emphasising "the theme of the impossibility of those ever falling away who were once accepted and received into covenant with God, for he seemed to know that in that confidence, and that trust my whole hopes were centred."³⁾

After a day spent in his company Robert noted that he had been "diverted from the worship of God by attending to the quibbles and dogmas of this singular and unaccountable being."⁴⁾ He noted too, "when we were speaking of certain divines and their tenets that his face assumed something of the appearance of theirs; and it struck me that by setting his features to the mould of other people's, he entered at once into their conceptions and feelings."⁵⁾

This momentous day "on which I first met this mysterious associate, who from that day forth contrived to wind himself into all /

1)	Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner	p.136
2)	" " "	p.138
3)	" " "	p.138
4)	" " "	p.138
5)	" " "	p.139.

all my affairs, both spiritual and temporal"¹⁾, is noted down as 25th March 1704, when Robert Colwan was in his 18th year.

On his return from his walk, he was greeted by a shriek of dismay from his Mother, because of his altered appearance. He answered her queries roughly as always, though fear made him falter, under the gaze of the Rev. Wringhim, whose "eyes burned like candles."

However, all were agreed that the mysterious stranger could be no Devil's agent, since he admitted the Rev. Wringhim's principles in their fullest latitude. The next day was one of holy exultation at Robert's election to grace, when Wringhim commended him to God "as a captain putteth a sword into the hands²⁾ of his sovereign, wherewith to lay waste his enemies." This dedication appealed to one of Robert's temperament "and I rejoiced in the commission finding it more congenial to my nature to be cutting sinners off with the sword than to be haranguing them from the pulpit, striving to produce an effect which God, by his act of absolute predestination, had for ever rendered impracticable."³⁾

On the next day, Robert surprised the strange youth sitting on a stile in the field of Finnieston, reading a Bible, written in a strange language and intersected with red lines and verses. "A sensation resembling a stroke of electricity came over me, on first casting my eyes on that mysterious book and I stood motionless. He looked up, smiled, closed his book, and put it in his bosom. "You seem strangely affected, dear sir, by looking at my book,"⁴⁾ said he mildly.

Thus /

1)	Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner.	p.139
2)	"	p.142
3)	"	p.143
4)	"	p.144.

Thus their intimacy progressed month by month, though Robert noted that "instead of being a humble disciple of mine, this new acquaintance was to be my guide and director, and all under the humble guise of one stooping¹⁾ at my feet to learn the right."

After some time, Robert pressed for his friend's name, and was told Gil - Martin would suit, though the young man suggested that he had servants and subjects more than he could number, whom he had left to gratify a whim, and had, in all the city, selected Robert for company.

The latter for a time imagined the mysterious Gil to be the Czar Peter the Great of Russia, who was then travelling through Europe in disguise. As before, however, he alternately longed for and desired to shun Gil Martin's acquaintance.

First to condemn Robert's new friendship, was a certain Mc. Blanchard - "a worthy pious divine, but quite of the moral cast," who, having met Gil-Martin, hated and feared him. "I can easily see that both you and he are carrying your ideas of absolute predestination, and its concomitant appendages, to an extent that overthrows all religion and revelation together,"²⁾ the old man warned the young Robert.

Gil-Martin returned the minister's deadly antipathy; by intense concentration he seemed to assume Blanchard's very appearance and Robert, in absence of mind, even addressed Gil-Martin as if he were the old divine.

"Instead /

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner
2) " " "

p.147
p.153

"Instead of being amused at the quandary I was in, he seemed offended; indeed, he never was truly amused with anything."¹⁾

Not long after this, by his rhetoric, he persuaded Robert that Blanchard was an enemy to the true faith, and must be eliminated. After much priming of Robert's courage, they lay await for their prey behind some bushes: the old man came steadily on to his death. Gil-Martin's shot seemed to misfire. Robert's pistol was discharged at close range, when Mr. Blanchard, drawn by a sudden noise, came across to the bush. The whole episode is told in startling detail; the deed is not entirely cold-blooded in execution, for Hogg depicts the curious mental anguish of Robert, not wholly persuaded by his friend as to the righteousness of his action.

"When he paused and looked abroad on nature; the act was highly impressive: he seemed conscious of being all alone, and conversant only with God and the elements of his creation. Never was there such a picture of human inadvertency!

a man approaching step by step to the one that was to hurl him out of one existence into another with as much ease and indifference as the ox goeth to the stall. Hideous vision, wilt thou not be gone from my mental sight! If not, let me bear with thee as I can!"²⁾

Having implicated another young and eminent preacher in the crime, Gil-Martin and Robert moved on to further crusades in Edinburgh, where a wider field awaited them. Subtly Gil-Martin insinuates that Robert's father and brother are /

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner
2) " " "

p.154
p.161.

are both enemies of the cause and must therefore forfeit their lives. Robert is in a quandary.

"I had a desire to slay him, it is true, and such a desire too as a thirsty man has to drink; but at the same time, this longing desire was mingled with a certain terror, as if I had dreaded that the drink for which I longed was mixed with deadly poison."¹⁾ Besides, he was even beginning to doubt "the infallibility of the elect". "But I was brought over again by the unwearied diligence of my friend to repent of my back-sliding."²⁾

There then follow the events narrated in the Editor's Narrative, with additional detail, as for example, Robert's curious malady for a month, when he continually fancied himself to be two persons - one of them always standing a little to his left. During this period, he believed that his relatives were bewitching him!

"The most perverse part of it was that I rarely conceived myself to be any of the two persons. I thought for the most part that my companion was one of them, and my brother the other; and I found that, to be obliged to speak and answer in the character of another man, was a most awkward business at the long run.

Who can doubt from this statement, that I was bewitched, and that my relatives were at the ground of it?"³⁾

Faithfully, Robert followed Gil-Martin's instructions, haunting and jibing at his brother, pursuing him up Arthur's Seat, and /

1)	Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner	p.169
2)	" " "	p.169
3)	" " "	p.177

and after some hesitation, during which he beheld "in a veil of misty vapour" "a lady robed in white" who exhorted him to turn from evil, attempting to push George over the crag, and finally, smiting him in the back from the darkness of an Edinburgh alley. On that last encounter, Robert reports the swordplay in his memoir, as a sudden rescue of his friend Gil-Martin, sorely tried by the dexterity of the Sinner George Colwan. As in the adventure on Arthur's Seat, Robert is beset by certain scruples which irritate and offend his illustrious friend.

"I did not think the Scripture promises to the elect taken in their utmost latitude, warranted the assurance that they could do no wrong; and that, therefore, it behoved every man to look well to his steps.

There was no religious scruple that irritated my enlightened friend and master so much as this. He could not endure it. And, the sentiments of our great covenanted reformers being on his side, there is not a doubt that I was wrong. He lost all patience on hearing what I advanced on this matter, and, taking hold of me, he led me into a darksome booth in a confined entry; and, after a friendly but cutting reproach, he bade me remain there, in secret and watch the event. 'And if I fall,' said he, 'you will not fail to avenge my death?'¹⁾

Robert from the close, "prey to despair", watches the two swordsmen, silhouetted in the moonlight, strike and parry.

"It /

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p.194

"It was a desperate and terrible engagement. I at first thought that the royal stranger and great champion of the faith would overcome his opponent with ease, for I considered Heaven as on his side, and nothing but the arm of sinful flesh against him. But I was deceived. The sinner stood firm as a rock, while the assailant flitted about like a shadow, or rather like a spirit.¹⁾"

There came a moment when Robert's 'friend' "quitted his sword and called out. I could resist no longer; so, springing from my concealment, I rushed between them with my sword drawn, and parted them as if they had been two schoolboys: then, turning to my brother, I addressed him as follows: 'Wretch! miscreant! Knowest thou what thou art attempting? Wouldst thou lay thine hand on the Lord's annointed, or shed his precious blood? Turn thee to me, that I may chastise thee for all thy wickedness, and not for the many injuries thou hast done to me!! To it we went with full thirst of vengeance on every side. The 'duel was fierce', but the might of Heaven prevailed, and not my might. The ungodly and reprobate young man fell covered with wounds, and with curses and blasphemy in his mouth, while I escaped uninjured. Thereto his power extended not."²⁾

The high words and heroic tone are in sharp contrast to Bell Calvert's account of the dastardly and murderous stab in the back. Even Robert has his doubts as to the actual sequence of events, for he writes in his memoir:-

"I will not deny that my own immediate impressions of this /

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner
2) " " "

p.195
p.196.

this affair in some degree differed from this statement. But this is precisely as my illustrious friend described it to be afterwards, and I can rely implicitly on his information, as he was at that time a looker-on, and my senses all in a state of agitation, and he could have no motive for saying what was not the positive truth.¹⁾"

Once possessed of the lands of Dalcastle on the death of his father, Robert falls into a strange state; while he appears to lose consciousness of his actions for a space of time, various wicked deeds are perpetrated and all are attributed to him. To his amazement, his friend, Gil-Martin, bears testimony against him and astounds him with the information that he Robert, has been in a terrible fit of inebriety.

After a reunion with the Rev. Wringhim and his mother who become his guests; Robert's next conscious act is six months later, when he enquires for a servant who is dead and for his mother, who has been mysteriously murdered. He learns from a new servant that he is to be tried at court. However, a strange feeling of release comes over him, as he realizes he is free from his mother, and that the mysterious stranger has departed.

The new servant, Samuel Scrape, gives Hogg an opportunity for another inset sketch of Scottish character. The man is a Cameronian and a native of Penpunt: he has a fund of droll stories, all in Hogg's own vein, and is instrumental in enriching the book with a humorous fable, characteristically Scots in theme and idiom./

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner

and idiom. It is perhaps illuminating to compare Lockhart's Cameronian in Matthew Wald, with this one in the Confessions. Lockhart's character is a dour and terrible fanatic, Hogg's Penpunt is a shrewd, 'pawky' fellow; both are depicted as ready to distort their creed to suit their interests, but whereas Lockhart's commits a murder to obtain a little money, Hogg's Cameronian tells a sly and amusing anecdote to justify his desires.

The impression derived from Hogg's and Lockhart's treatment of the Cameronian type is one of distrust of their motives and honesty: both authors disliked extremists, but where Hogg poked fun at them as hypocrites at times, to Lockhart they had a darker strain in their temperament. Characters capable of such rigidity in their lives and religious beliefs, were dangerous men, capable of pushing schemes to all lengths. Hogg, bluff, good-humoured and sane, laughed at them; Lockhart the spectator and the scholar detested the evil, and found its roots in a religion, narrow and oppressive. Needless to say, the Cameronians were originally, a brave and worthy sect, honoured for their piety and devotion to their tenets; to some natures, however such tenets are dangerous. Endeavouring to prove to his strange master, Robert Colwan that he had long been in his service, this Penpunt remarked:-

"Weel then, since you havna paid me ony wages, an' I can prove day and date when I was hired, an' came hame to your service, will you be sae kind as to pay me now? That's the best way o' curing a man o' the mortal disease o' leasing-making that I ken o'."

"I should think that Penpunt and Cameronian principles would /

would not admit of a man taking twice payment for the same article."

"In sic a case as this, sir, I disna hinge upon principles, but a piece o' good manners; an' I can tell you that, at sic a crisis, a Cameronian is a gay-an weel-bred man. He's driven to this, and he maun either make a breach in his friend's good name, or in his purse; an' Oh, sir, whilk o' thae, think you, is the most precious? For instance, an a Galloway drover had comed to the town of Penpunt, an' said to a Cameronian (the folks a' Cameronians there), 'Sir, I want to buy your cow'. 'Vera weel', says the Cameronian, "'I just want to sell the cow, sae gie me twanty pund Scots, a' take her w'ye'. It's a bargain. The drover takes away the cow, an' gies the Cameronian his twanty pund Scots. But after that, he meets him again on the white sands among a' the drovers an' dealers o' the land, an' the Gallowayman, he says to the Cameronian, afore a' thae witnesses, "Come, Master Whigham, I hae never paid you for yon bit useless cow that I bought. I'll pay her the day, but you maun mind the luck-penny; there's muckle need for't --- or something to that purpose. The Cameronian then turns out to be a civil man, an' canna bide to make the man baith a fule an' a liar at the same time, afore a' his associates; an' therefore he pits his principles aff at the side, to be a kind o' sleepin' partner, as it war, an' brings up his good breeding to stand at the counter; he pockets the money gies the Galloway drover time o' day an' comes his way. An' wha's to blame? Man mind yoursel is the first commandment. A Cameronian's principles never come atween him an' his purse, nor canna in the /

the present case; for, as I canna bide to make you out a leear,
I'll thank you for my wages."¹⁾

The 'canny' Penpunt exhibits that love of dialectics, so characteristic of the Scots peasant, as well as dogma, ratiocination, and a glib tongue, all very powerful instruments in leading Scotsmen to mistake theological argument for religion and to justify whatever conduct in life appealed to them.

From Penpunt too, Robert learned of the rumours concerning himself, that were rife in the village.

"Oo, I trow it's a' stuff - folk shouldna heed what's said by auld crazy kimmers. But there are some o' them weel ken'd for witches, too; an' they say, 'Lord have a care o' us'. They say the deil's often seen gaun sidie for sidie w' ye, whiles in ae shape an' whiles in another. An' they say that he whiles takes your ain shape, or else enters into you, and then you turn a deil yoursel."²⁾

The worthy Penpunt had tried to remonstrate with the wives of the clachan.

"Well, you see, sir, I says to them, 'It will be lang afore the deil intermeddle wi' as serious a professor, and as fervent a prayer as my master, for, gin he gets the upper hand o' sickan men, wha's to be safe? An' what think ye they said, sir? There was ane Lucky Shaw set up her lang lantern chafts, an' answered me, an a' the rest shanned and noddit in assent an' approbation: 'Ye, silly sauchless, Cameronian cuif!' quo' she, 'is that a' that ye ken about the wiles and doings o' the Prince o' the Air, that rules an' works in the bairns of disobedience? Gin /

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner
2) " " "

p.222.
p.223.

Gin ever he observes a proud professor, wha has mae than ordinary pretensions to a divine calling, and that reards and prays till the very howlets learn his preambles, that's the man Auld Simmie fixes on to mak a dishclout o' "1)

With the grim humour, the Scots reserve along with a real respect, for the powers of the Devil, Lucky Shaw describes Satan as a packman, familiar figure in the cities of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. "Aye, I trow, auld Ingleby, the Liverpool packman, never came up Glasco street wi' prouder pomp when he had ten horse-laid's afore him o' Flanders lace an' Hollin lawn, an' silks an' satins frae the eastern Indies, than Satan was strodge into Hell with a pack-laid o' the souls o' proud professors on his braid shoulders. Ha, ha, ha! I think I see how the auld thief wad be gaun through his gized dominions, crying his wares, in derision, "Wha will buy a fresh cauler divine, a bouzy bishop, a fasting zealot, or a piping priest?"2)

There then follows a wonderful fabliau, grotesque, yet true to the devil's peculiar character in the Scottish tradition, and illustrating Lucky Shaw's contention that there were mony deils aneath the mask o' zealous professors, roaming3) about in Kirks and meeting houses o' the land."

In the tale of the people of Auchtermuchty, Hogg has touched on a live nerve. Even in his day, folk literature was a /

1)	Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner	p.224.
2)	" " "	p.225
3)	" " "	p.225.

a living thing, and he himself was close to the peasant imagination; his early training had not been from books, as had Lockhart's, but from the Border ballads and tales recited by his mother, Margaret Laidlaw, who had a deep reverence for the oral tradition as against the written word. "My mother",¹⁾ he wrote to Scott in 1802, "is a living miscellany of old songs", and the emphasis there is on the word 'living'. Cold print is chastening: so is the discipline that writing exerts: Hogg had not suffered so much from either, that the fire had been extinguished." Lucky Shaw's tale has the verve and diablerie of an old Scots ballad like "The Twa Corbies", it has the same terrifying realism, a realism all the more compelling, because it does not relate to normal life, but to that plane of the peasant imagination, which a tradition of savage fighting, bitter poverty, grim legend and Calvin's Hell had made so concrete.

It appeared that the "deils in the farrest nooks o' Hell" were alarmed because of the sanctimony of Auchtermuchty. "It was but the year afore the last that the people o' the town o' Auchtermuchty grew so rigidly righteous that the meanest hind among them became a shining light in ither touns an' parishes. There was naught to be heard, neither night nor day but preaching, praying, argumentation an' catechising in a' the famous toun o' Auchtermuchty. The young men wooed their sweethearts out o' the Song o' Solomon, an' the girls returned²⁾ answers in strings o' verses out o' the Psalms."

However, /

1) The Ettrick Shepherd - Edith Batho, p.24. 1927 C.M.P.

2) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, p.226.

However, an "auld carl, Robin Ruthven," "a cunning man", who "had rather mae wits than his ain, for he had been in the hands o' the fairies when he was young an' a' kinds o' spirits were visible to his een, an' their language as familiar to him as his ain mother tongue," "was sitting on the side o' the West Lowmond, ae still, gloomy night in September, when he saw a bridal o' corbie crows coming east the lift, just on the edge o' the gloaming. The moment that Robin saw them, he kenned, by their movements, that they were craws o' some ither warld than this; so he signed himself, and crap into the middle o' his bourock. The corbie craws came a' an' sat down round about him, an' they poukit their black sooty wings an' spread them out to the breeze to cool; and Robin heard ae corbie speaking, an' another answering him; and the tane said to the tither:

'Where will the ravens find a prey the night?' 'On the lean crazy souls o' Auchtermuchty," quo the tither. 'I fear they will be o'er weel wrappit up in the warm flannens o' faith, an' clouted wi' the dirty duds o' repentance for us to mak a meal o',! quo the first. 'Whaten vile sounds are these that I hear coming bumming up the hill?' 'Oh, these are the hymns and praises o' the auld wives and creeshy loons o' Auchtermuchty, wha are gaun crooning their way to Heaven; an' gin it warnna for the shame o' being beat, we might let our
1)
great enemy tak them.'

The corbies however decide to "catch them, and catch them with their own bait too". Then with lud croaking and crowing /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner p.227.

crowing, the bridal of corbies again scaled the dusty air and left Robin Ruthven in the middle of his cairn, while they repaired to "a feast on the Sidlaw hills," below the hill of Macbeth.

The next day instead of their proper minister, there appeared through "the western door" of Auchtermuchty Kirk, a strange divine, "clothed in a robe of black sackcloth, that flowed all around him, and trailed far behind, and they weened him an angel,¹⁾ come to exhort them, in disguise," nor would they listen to Robin Ruthven's warnings.

"The good people of Auchtermuchty were in perfect raptures with the preacher, who had thus sent them to Hell by the slump, tag-rag, and bobtail! Nothing in the world delights a truly religious people so much as consigning them to eternal²⁾ damnation."

On the next day appointed, "all the inhabitants of that populous country, far and near, flocked to Auchtermuchty. Cupar, Newburgh, and Strathmiglo, turned out men, women, and children. Perth and Dundee gave their thousands; and, from the East Nook of Fife to the foot of the Grampian hills, there was nothing but running and riding that morning to Auchtermuchty. The Kirk would not hold the thousandth part of them. A splendid tent was erected on the brae north of the town, and round that the countless congregation assembled."

Again the warning voice of Robin went unheeded, and he was dragged from the tent. "The great preacher appeared once more, and went through his two discourses with increased energy and /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p. 228
 2) " " " " p.229

and approbation. All who heard him were amazed, and many of them went into fits, writhing and foaming in a state of most horrid agitation.¹⁾ Only Robin perceived "what they in the height of their enthusiasm, perceived not - the ruinous tendency of the tenets so sublimely inculcated."

At the climax of the tale, Hogg lapses, very naturally, into the graphic Scots tongue again.

"Robin kenned the voice of his friend the corby-craw again, and was sure he could not be wrong" When the strange visitant "stood on the green brae in the sight of the hale congregation, an' a' war alike anxious to pay him some mark o' respect, "Robin Ruthven came in amang the thrang, to try to effect what he had promised and with the greatest readiness and simplicity, just took haud o' the side o' the wide gown, an' in sight of a' present, held it aside as high as the preacher's knee, and, behold, there was a pair o' cloven feet! The auld thief was fairly caught in the very height o' his proud conquest, an' put down by an auld carl. He could feign nae mair, but, gnashing on Robin wi' his teeth, he, dartit into the air like a fiery dragon, an' heust a reid rainbow o'er the taps o' the Lowmonds.

A' the auld wives an' weavers o' Auchtermuchty fell down flat wi' affright, an' betook them to their prayers aince again, for they saw the dreadfu' danger they had escapit, an' frae that day to this it is a hard matter to gar an Auchtermuchty man listen to a sermon at a', an' a harder ane still to gar him applaud ane, for he thinks aye that he sees the cloven foot peeping/

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p.230.

peeping out from beneath ilka sentence." ¹⁾

The sly humour of the last paragraph, the fairy touches about the tale, - the changeling Robin, the fiery dragon, and red rainbow - are in Hogg's peculiar vein. Not for nothing, was his grandfather Will o' Phaup, last of Ettrick region, to speak to the fairies.

Although the fable is a long digression, its appearance at this moment of Robert's fortunes, and its moral of the "Wolves in sheep's claithing" ²⁾, show artistic propriety. With the dramatic power, and graphic imagery, there lurks satire; there is more than an echo of Burns' "Holy Fair", in the picture of the transports of the congregation before the tent, as the devil addresses them. Here, Hogg made use of the devil's mass, or black mass, many references to which are found in the confessions of witches on trial, in the Criminal Records.

Robert Colwan greeted the recital of this tale with dismay. "It was not because I thought my illustrious friend was the Devil, or that I took a fool's idle tale as a counter-balance to Divine revelation that had assured me of my justification in the sight of God before the existence of time. But in short, it gave me a view of my own state, at which I shuddered, as indeed I now always did when the image of my devoted friend and ruler ³⁾ presented itself to my mind."

But there was no escape from the tormentor. "If I had taken my measures to abscond and fly from my native place, in /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner p.230
 2) " " " p.225
 3) " " " p.231.

in order to free myself of this tormenting, intolerant and bloody reformer, he had likewise taken his to expel me, or throw me into the hands of justice"¹⁾ First of all, through his intervention, the hardly recognisable body of his mother and that of a young woman are found, buried in the sands of the linn. As an infuriated mob, bearing the bodies approaches the house, to make Robert touch the corpses before witnesses, the illustrious stranger "manifestly in the utmost state of alarm"²⁾ suddenly enters Robert's room, and changing his green tunic and turban for Colwan's black clothes, bids him flee, as there is an additional party in quest of him - officers with a Justiciary warrant from Edinburgh, despatched as a result of Miss Logan's investigations.

In the stranger's disguise, Robert is accorded respect, and safely passes the furious crowd bearing the sheeted bodies. "I would fain have examined their appearance, had I not perceived the apparent fury in the looks of the men."³⁾

The virtue in his friend's robes had turned Robert from a horrified man to a gloating fiend. "I felt a strange and unwonted delight in viewing this scene and a certain pride of heart in being supposed the perpetrator of the unnatural crimes laid to my charge."⁴⁾

The first night of his flight is spent in a weaver's cottage, (artisans much maligned in literature, and in Scottish story, prone to visitation from the Devil, e.g. Tod Lapraik, R.L.S./

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner p. 232.
 2) " " " " p. 235
 3) " " " " p.237
 4) " " " " p.237.

R.D.S.) The owner of the dwelling views him with suspicion and distaste, despite his godly conversation, and cautions his wife, against entertaining the Devil unaware.

"The weaver's speech had such an effect on me that both he and his wife were alarmed at my looks. The latter thought I was angry, and chided her husband gently for his rudeness, but the weaver himself rather seemed to be confirmed in his opinion that I was the Devil, for he looked round like a startled roebuck, and immediately betook him to the family Bible".¹⁾ Finally the good man looks Robert among the looms, treadles and pirns.

Early next morning, feverish and parched with thirst, the fugitive starts to dress, only to find that his black clothes have somehow been returned to him, but of his green tunic, buff belt and turban, there are no signs. On returning from the window, where he had been examining the clothes, he became entangled among the weaver's looms and had to rouse his churlish, unwilling host to extricate him. The weaver addresses him in language that has the reek of Dunbar's Scots:-

"May /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, p. 240.

"May aw the pearls o' damnation light on your silly snout, and I dinna estricat ye well enough! Ye ditit donnart, deil's herd that ye be! What made ye gang howkin in there to be a poor man's ruin? Come out, ye vile rag-of-a-muffin, or I gar ye come out wi' mair shame and disgrace, an' fewer haill¹⁾ banes in your body."

On discovering the mysterious substitution of the clothes however, both weaver and wife howl in terror and drive Robert as the enchanter from the door.

Footsore, hungry and weary, Robert Colwan at length arrives in Edinburgh, where he hopes to make use of his classical learning. He boards near the West Port with one Linton, a compositor in the Queen's printing house. Under the Border name of Elliot, Colwan is given some work to do, and soon persuades Mr Watson, his employer, to allow his memoirs, which he describes as a kind of religious allegory like the Pilgrim's Progress, to be printed. How exalted the author felt at the opportunity afforded him "to blow up the idea of any dependence on good works, and morality, forsooth!"²⁾ With his book in the press, the writer breaks off his History and Confessions - "I must now furnish my Christian readers with a key to the process, management and winding up of the whole matter."²⁾

From Chester, July 27, 1712 he writes of blasted hopes. "My precious journal is lost! consigned to the flames! My enemy hath found me out, and there is no hope of peace or rest for me on this side the grave."³⁾

The /

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner p.244.
 2) " " " p.251
 3) " " " p.252

The Devil had appeared twice in the printing house, assisting the terrified workmen. An account of this visitation caused Mr Watson, the head of the house, to read the treatise, condemn it and consign the MS. to the flames, as blasphemy.

After this incident, fearful adventures befall the fugitive. One night when he was lodging in the stable of a farm with some of the hinds, the horses took fright; the labourers escaped, but Robert, not knowing the place in the dark, fell into one of the mangers and was fearfully kicked by the maddened animals. On another night, when lying in a lonely cottage, he was turned out by the owner and his family in terror, for round the house raged "a number of hideous fiends, who gnashed on me with their teeth, and clenched their crimson paws in my face." From this horde, he was rescued, "by my dreaded and devoted friend, who pushed me on, and with his gilded rapier, waving and brandishing around me defended me against all their united attacks."¹⁾

After this his persecutor and defender beseeches him - "Since our hopes are blasted in this world, and all our schemes of grandeur over thrown; and since our everlasting destiny is settled by a decree which no act of ours can invalidate, let us fall by our own hands, or by the hands of each other."²⁾

As Robert shuddered at the thought, the being cried out:- "If you will not pity yourself, have pity on me." "Turn your eyes on me, and behold to what I am reduced."

"My /

1) The Memoirs and Confession of a Justified Sinner p.264.

2) " " " p.265.

"My immortal spirit, blood and bones were all withered at the blasting sight; and I arose and withdrew, with groanings¹⁾ which the pangs of death shall never wring from me."

After that, Robert's sojourn on earth was short. The last entry is made on the moors of Ault Righ, August, 1712. Robert has changed his apparel for that of a poor homely shepherd, "whom I found lying on a hill-side singing to himself some woeful love-ditty," "and I found moreover that in this garb of a common shepherd,²⁾ I was made welcome in every house."

Echoes of the Ettrick shepherd's own experience, lie behind those words.

In this character, Robert is engaged first as a shepherd, then as a cowhand by a Border farmer, whose house suddenly becomes haunted. Banished from the dwelling-house to the byre, Colwan passes nights of hideous torment, clawed by devils, and only released from them, by repeating a fearful prayer.

At length weakened bodily and mentally, he makes his last entry:-

"But, ah! who is yon that I see approaching furiously, his stern face blackened with horrid despair. My hour is at hand. Almighty God, what is this that I am about to do? The hour of repentance is past and now my fate is inevitable, Amen, for ever! I will now seal up my little book and conceal it;³⁾ and cursed be he who trieth to alter or amend."

1) The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner p. 265

2) " " " p.267

3) " " " p.271.

IV

As epilogue to the tale, comes the letter quoted from Blackwood for August 1823, of the finding of the suicide's grave. The supposed editor of the opening narrative inquires about Hogg, writer of the letter, asking a friend if the information could be authentic. - "But God knows! Hogg has imposed as ingenious lies on the public ere now." (p.277)

There then follows a description of a visit to the shepherd, who was to be sought as guide to the grave of the Scots mummy. Hogg is represented as standing near the foot of the market at Thirlestane Green, bent on selling paulies and uninterested in any remains. "I have mair ado than I can manage¹⁾ the day, foreby ganging to houk up hunder-year-auld-banes."

An old shepherd, however, is found, who announces that the suicide's grave was not on the hill of Cowan's croft, but on the top of a hill called Fair-Law in the Duke of Buccleuch's lands. "He added that it was a wonder how the poet could be mistaken there, who once herded the very ground where the grave²⁾ is, and saw both hills from his own window."

Amid such pleasant mystification, the excavation of the grave is carefully described, and an account of the preservation of the body, with its broad blue bonnet and plaid, is given; mention is also made of the risp of hay, fresh and unbroken, through the Devil's enchantment, as on the day when the suicide looped it round his neck. With many grisly details respecting the /

1) The Memoirs and Confession of a Justified Sinner p.279

2) " " " p.279.

the corpse, the writer finally describes the finding of the MS. in a leathern case, part printed, part written by hand.

As a final touch, having given his narrative as a master story-teller would, the writer professes to be unable to judge its meaning, counting it either a dream or a madness - "but in this day, and with the present generation, it will not go down that a man should be daily tempted by the Devil, in the resemblance of a fellow-creature; and at length lured to self-destruction, in the hopes that this same fiend and tormentor was to suffer and fall along with him. It was a bold theme for an allegory, and would have suited that age well had it been taken up by one fully qualified for the task which this writer¹⁾ was not."

1) The Memoirs and Confession of a Justified Sinner. p.287.

V

It is interesting to notice that two men, so different in temperament and upbringing as John Gibson Lockhart and James Hogg, should be drawn to portray the same tendencies in the Scottish character. The novels, *Adam Blair*, *Matthew Wald* and *the Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, all depict a spiritual struggle; Lockhart shows evil entering as a canker in the minds of his protagonists; Hogg, as well as portraying the sinner's distracted mental state externalises the evil force in the creation of Gil-Martin.

This keen consciousness of sin, whether in the form of bitter remorse of conscience, or projected into the physical figure of a Devil, comes from Scotland's past.

First of all, why did devils and witches play such a large part in Scottish life and literature? Many reasons have been assigned. Scotland, as a land of twilight, mists and mountains was a fitting home for superstition and legend. A fertile folk-imagination peopled her lochs with kelpies, and her mountains with bogles, with evil or with good spirits. Because of superstition, even in the dawning of christianity, in wild and remote tracts of country, certain rites would still be performed by an ignorant people afraid of angering the spirits of the place. Perhaps the later black masses and witches' sabbaths of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, are lingering traces of forgotten cults. Significant in this respect, was the proclamation at the Cross in Edinburgh before the battle of Flodden; the title given to it by Pitscottie, an old Scottish authority, was the "Summondie of Platecock" or Pluto "for it seems that in that comprehensive Hell of
of /

of the Scottish Middle Ages lurked all the old gods and goddesses, classical and Scandinavian driven underground by the triumph of Christianity.¹⁾

The Celtic race too plays a part in all this. A poetic people, gifted with the "second sight," might arouse the jealousy of their neighbours; and the terrible witch hunts of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries may be interpreted, as last smouldering outbursts of unrealised jealousy, though that is searching far for clues. However, Caithness and Sutherland, were the last haunts of noted witches.

With the advent of the reformation, came added stimulation of the frenzy against witches. The Calvinistic theology brought with it a lurid picture of Hell and the devil. "Witchcraft is the main, almost the sole preoccupation of the demonologists of the Reformation, and later, The "Black Genevan" ministers could smell out a witch like beagles. Perhaps there is something in Calvinism that makes for a quicker sense of the diabolical, and Chesterton, if my memory is not at fault, talks somewhere of that religion which Theologians call Calvinism and Christians, Devil Worship."²⁾

In the times of Mary, Queen of Scots, the Lady Buccleuch, Knox himself, the Countess of Atholl and many others were accused of sorcery. A Statute of 1563 had made witchcraft a crime punishable by death, for, according to Calvinist theology, to deny witchcraft was to deny the existence of a Witch of Endor or a Simon Magus, and so, to doubt the word of the gospel. Mary's son, /

1) The Devil in Scotland, Douglas Percy Bliss, London, 1934, p.8

2) " " " " " p.4.

son, James, was most emphatic on this point in his Dialogue on demonology, and personally examined persons "delatit" for trial in the North Berwick witches case. The three quartos of Pitcairn's Scottish Criminal Trials are packed with extraordinary facts concerning witchcraft.

What was the nature of this devil who tempted so many persons of high or of mean birth to have dealings with him? He had powerful enchantment; the Moray witches of King Duffus' reign; far-famed Thomas of Ercildoune, the true 'Thomas of the ballads, Sir Michael Scott "so slender in the flanks" included in Dante's Inferno; the Lord Soulis, are in the long line of Scottish people who had dealings with this devil. Undoubtedly, some would be recognized warlocks because of their undue learning, but others for sensational delights, horrors, and the excitement of things secret. In the milder clime of England, witches were poor old women, like Addison's Moll White, but in the North, they were often "strapping queans".

If religious life was clamped by the authoritative dogma of the Roman or Calvinistic creed; if to be godly meant drawing out a bleak and frightened existence, with the none too cheerful prospect of being damned at the end, unless you were one of God's elect, there was always a merry devil to show you the reverse of the picture. Certainly the character of Satan in Scottish literature and history is a curious mixture of grimness and humour, and he had many persuasive advocates. Sometimes he was a "meikle black man", sometimes a dog, or a pig:- often he played the bagpipes. "There is something really amicable about /

about a devil with a sense of fun, a devil as a dog with his tail going 'ay wig wag, wig wag'¹⁾."

Hogg's portrayal of the devil is in accordance with Scottish tradition. There is a grotesque, mordaunt quality about Hogg's tale. As far back as Dunbar, the curious mixture is to be found, something compounded of monkeyish humour and diablerie, reminiscent of the gargoyles grinning out from the corners of a mediaeval cathedral. Mediaeval carvers, or artists like Albrecht Durer and Baldung Grien probably helped to keep the image of a fantastic devil, alive in the European peoples' imagination, for long after the Reformation. Dunbar thus describes heraldically the birth of the fiend:-

"He sall ascend as ane horrible grephoun
Him meit sall in the air ane scho dragoun
This terrible monsteris sall togeddir thríst
And in the cludis gett the Antichrist
Quhill all the air infeck of thair pusoun".

So much for the grotesque element.

There is humour too: a certain jocularly, both in the attitude to him and in the Devil himself "Mahoun" is bandied on the lips of the two poets, Dunbar and Kennedy in their "flyting" and in "The Devillis Inquest", the fiend goes through the town in sly humour whispering to the "sowtèrs", "fleschours" "tavernneirs", and to all who swore "aithes of crewaltie."

"Renunce thy God and cum to me."

At a later date, Robert Burns, who has affinity to Dunbar, continues the humorous assault, hailing the Devil jocosely:

"O thou! whatever title suit thee
Auld Hornie Satan, Nick or Cloutie."

This /

1) The Devil in Scotland, Douglas Percy Bliss, London, 1934, p.22.

This "deil" chooses his followers from the young and jolly: the "een" of one Tam are enrich'd" by a "souple jade" capering at midnight in Alloway Kirkyard, while "auld Nick in shape o' beast

A towzie tyke, black, grim, and large"

"hotched and blew with might and main" to give them music

As has been mentioned, Hogg lets us understand that Gil Martin had no sense of humour, but he certainly had the spirit of sly mischief, when he grinned and mowed at the witnesses watching the devilry of young Robert Colwan. This too is part of the traditional character of the fiend.

This familiarity was not born of contempt: testimony to the very real power of the devil was given by good Mr Boston of Ettrick in Hogg's own countryside, and many before and after him wrestled with the fiend, but the popular underlying attitude was jocular one, as was often the case where terror and solemnity prevailed. In Scotland, to this day, some of the merriest jests are the most macabre, connected as they are with funerals and death. A good instance was cited in Miss Ferrier's novel, "The Inheritance", where Miss Pratt's arrival in a hearse caused her lordly relative his death stroke. It is as if Scots people, realising that death and evil are insoluble mysteries, reduced them both to man-made concepts in droll tales of chestings, burials, and of a "meikle black man" - the devil. Not through contempt, but through lively realisation, they give expression to their feelings in countless anecdote.

Hypocrisy was the devil's traditional guise. Gil Martin assumes what character he pleases, to tempt his chosen victim to destruction: under cover of religion, he pushes beliefs to /

to excess. One of the devil's chief advocates in seventeenth century Scotland was the famous warlock Major Weir an excessive hypocrite. "and, notwithstanding of all these flagittious and horrid sins, he was a dreadful hypocrite and deceiver of God's people, in pretending to the fear of God in a singular and eminent way, making profession of strickness in piety beyond others: presuming to take upon him to pray publickly in many companies and in the houses of his friends, neighbours and acquaintances, affecting the reputation and character of a pious and devout man. He died obdurately without any sign of repentance, and would not hear any minister pray to and for him, telling his condemnation was sealed, and that now since he was to goe to the devil, he would not anger him."¹⁾

Ministers, like Adam Blair, devout men, like Robert Colwan were choice victims for the devil.

"The deil an' his agents they fash nane but the gude fock, the Cameronians, and the prayin' ministers an' sic like" writes Hogg in his tale of "The Woolgatherer."

We read in the annals of witchcraft, many cases of ministers and good persons being persecuted by the Devil and his Agents, e.g. Wodrow MSS. p.xcvii.

"Since I saw you in Edinburgh, in May last, there has been great noise of witchcraft in the parish of Loth in Sutherland, by which the minister is said to have suffered."²⁾

Haunting his victim was another amiable trait of the devil, and one exemplified by Gil Martin. He tempts with flattery /

1) Richard Law's Memorialls, p.22, Aprile 12, 1670

2) Letter from J. Fraser of Alnes, Ross Aprile 18, 1727

flattery and power: he comes and goes for a season, but the wretched victim:-

"Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread." 1)

This feeling of inexorable pursuit has something of a nightmare about it, "It was long before I durst look over my shoulder, but, when I did so, I perceived this ruined and debased potentate coming slowly on the same path, and I prayed that the Lord would hide me in the bowels of the earth or depth of the sea." 2)

As the fiend's face had reflected all the sinful, exultant spiritual pride of Robert Colwan at the height of his success, so now it mirrored all his despair and terror.

At times, there is even a dignity about the person of Gil Martin, and to the end, though his victim makes a show of resistance he bends Colwan to his will. Through the stern expression however, even through the despair, there is a hideous exaltation, as he watches the "limed" soul struggling for escape.

That escape, he offers in the form of suicide, the prime temptation of Satan, according to tradition. "This year many sad things fall out; sins committed; self-murder committed by severalls, both men and women. One hanged himself in the Tolbooth of Air, with his own ribbons that tied his sleeves, and was gotten hanging with his hands bound down, none being in the room but himself, which gives grounds to think that the divell personally helps /

1) S.T. Coleridge "The Ancient Mariner".

2) The Confessions, p.259.

helps to that unnatural murder when consented to." ¹⁾

The Rev. Robert Law notices that suicides possess "a sullen melancholyk humour that is natural to folk, which is dangerous where it abounds, if grace prevent not." ²⁾ The Sinner in Hogg's book "was remarkable for a deep, thoughtful and sullen disposition." His death was regarded as a prodigy. "This was accounted a great wonder; and everyone said, if the Devil had not assisted him, it was impossible the thing could have been done; for, in general, these ropes are so brittle, being made of green hay, that they will scarcely bear to be bound over the rick. And the more to horrify the good people of this neighbourhood, the drover said, when he first came in view, he could almost give his oath that he saw two people busily engaged at the hay-rick going round it and round it, and he thought they were dressing it." ³⁾

As to the finding of the suicide's body, years later, in a good state of preservation, there are many analogies. The body of one John Shaw of Bargarran was found a "quarter of yeir" after his strange disappearance, "his hat layed beside him, and his lather-cap upon his head and the string of his hat about his collar, which was ordinar to him, when he ryds in dark nights or windy nights, and his body found als fresh as if he had been newly dead; at the offtaking of his boots one of his heels bled. All men were sensible," continues Law, "that he was brought to that untymely end and death by the hid works of darkness." ⁴⁾

Thus the devil triumphed.

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- 1) R. Law's Memorialls. p. 100. (1676. Aug. & Sept.)
 - 2) R. Law's Memorialls. p. 100
 - 3) R. Law's Memorialls. p. 273
 - 4) R. Law's Memorialls. p. 112.

VI

As the reader peruses this remarkable tale of the devil revealed in realistic surroundings, he is reminded of many analogies. Hogg wrote in his life of Scott, that the latter criticized him as "just hurrying on from one vagary to another, without consistency or proper arrangement" and that he replied - "You are not often wrong, Mr Scott, and you were never righter in your life than you are now, for when I write the first line¹⁾ of a tale of novel, I know not what the second is to be."

Yet the presentation of the Confessions, with its Editor's Narrative, Memoir, and antiquarian letter, suggests the amazing documentary manner of Defoe. Hogg's production of witnesses and their contradiction or support of evidence, supplementing the suicide's story at various junctures, recalls Defoe's manner of establishing proof, as in his ghost story - The Apparition of Mrs Veal - where the spectre mentions definite books, such as Drelineourt's Book of Death, known as favourites with the woman when alive, and where the apparition is represented as dressed in a 'scoured' gown, known only to a few of her associates.

Defoe with his seemingly unconscious naturalism immediately recalls a writer of an older day - Bunyan. Hogg makes his editor suggest that the Confessions may be a religious allegory like the Pilgrim's Progress, but a closer parallel might be found in "The Life and Death of Mr Badman". Defoe and Bunyan with /

1) The Domestic Manners and Private Life of Sir Walter Scott, p. 80. pub. Oliver & Boyd, 1834.

with their tales of reprobates, have made the English middle class of the seventeenth century alive for us of the twentieth; the good, the honest, the drab, the vulgar, live and laugh and sin and pray in their pages. Mr Badman is a violent evil doer, liar, cheat and hypocrite, so real, he might have been one of the community from Bunyan's own background, in Bedford. There was no real equivalent to the English middle class of Defoe's time in Scotland, that land of extremes, but Hogg has given us a group of characters, who emerge from the shadows of this hideous tale, with salty Scots on their lips, to set off their dry humour; there is the old laird 'flyting' with his newly-married prim dame; young George, flushed and eager at tennis with his companions, the faithful good-hearted Mrs Logan turning herself into Nemesis through her devotion to the house of Colwan; saucy young Bessie Gillies, honoured among the race of hand-maids, pert and bobbing in the law court: sly Samuel Scrape, with his marvellous tale of Lucky Shaw; the stern ravaged beauty of Bell Calvert, whose stature grows as the tale progresses, reminiscent, in her dissolute life, of Moll Flanders; and dwarfing all those, two creations of fearful malignity, the one tall, oriental in magnificence, satanic, the other pale and shrunken, with hollow cheek, and eyes glittering with spite.

Though Bunyan's Mr Badman dies as Falstaff does, like a "Chrisom child", this death has its justice artistic and otherwise. "When God would shew the greatness of his anger against sin and sinners in one word, he saith 'They are joyned to Idols, let them alone. Let them alone. Let them alone that is, disturb them not; let them goe on without controll; let the Devil enjoy /

enjoy them peaceably , let him carry them out of the world
 1)
 unconverted quietly."

Hogg's sinner dies with the yawning pit before his eyes. Bunyan leaves that spectacle for after life:- "Oh! when they see they must shoot the Gulf and Throat of Hell! when they shall see that Hell hath shut her ghastly Jaws upon them! when they shall open their eyes, and find themselves within the belly and bowels
 2)
 of Hell!"

There is this kinship between them, reflected in their powerful imagery - both are robust sons of the people, gifted with a poet's imagination.

Another similarity between the Bedford tinker and the Ettrick shepherd is their love for digression, irrelevant to the main tale, usually suggestive of popular legend, such as the fate of drunkards, swearers and informers for whom the devil has come, just as in Lucky Shaw's tale, in the most unexpected way.

In his faithful consistency, (an amazing effort on Hogg's part,) in the Confessions, he resembles Fielding, another 18th century writer, in his attitude to the tale of Jonathan Wyld. Whatever Christian impulse of mercy or remorse, whatever glimmering of charity the criminal displays, is regarded as a flaw in his character, for the purpose of the satire; whenever Colwan hesitates before a fresh murder of his kin he strengthens his purpose, by a reminder that he is cutting off the enemies of God, and by wavering before the deed, is showing his essential weakness.

A tale to match the sulphurous gleam of the Confessions is /

1) The Life and Death of Mr Badman C.U.P. 1905, p. 173.

2) " " " " p. 179.

is Sir Walter Scott's "Wandering Willie's Tale" from his novel - Redgauntlet - where in the lurid light of Hell are described the devil with warlocks and a noble company of brilliant villains, like the great Claverhouse, with his dark, elf locks."

Robert Louis Stevenson was to capture in his tale of "Thrawn Janet" the tremendously vivid sense of "warslin" with a present power. The tale bears some points of resemblance with the Confessions: the old housekeeper of the minister, set upon and attacked by the cummers of the village, is thrown to "soun or droun" in the Dule water. The experience unhinges her mind, just as it "thraws" her neck. After that, a presence is felt in the parish of Baweary - the minister finds a Black Man of great stature sitting upon a grave, and, takes "a kind o' cauld grue in the marrow o' his banes" at sight of him. Finally comes that terrible night when he finds Janet "hangin' frae a nail beside the auld aik cabinet; her head aye lay on her shouther, her een were sticked, the tongue projeckit frae her mouth, and her heels were twa feet clear abune the floor." Worst of all - "she was hingin frae a single worsted thread for darnin' hose" -

The single thread is reminiscent of the slender risp that hanged the Sinner. The latter, like the poor old woman, was fairly possessed by the devil. In 'Thrawn Janet', however, the minister exorcised the fiend by prayer and "the auld deid desecrated corps of the witch-wife sae lang keepit frae the grave and hirlsed round by deils lowed up like a brunstane spunk and fell in ashes to the grund."

The horrid realistic detail, gusto of the Scots tongue and /

and the perfervid imagination are again in character.

An American author, after Hogg in time, Nathaniel Hawthorne also conceived the idea of describing in a novel, *The Scarlet Letter*, a man haunted by the devil. His victim is no self-deluded sinner but a saintly young minister, Mr Dimmesdale and his Satan is no unearthly Gil Martin, but a human being - an old physician, against whom the younger man had sinned.

"In a word, old Roger Chillingworth was a striking evidence of man's faculty of transforming himself into a devil, if he will only, for a reasonable space of time, undertake a devil's office. This unhappy person had effected such a transformation, by devoting himself for seven years to the constant analysis of a heart full of torture and deriving his enjoyment thence and adding fuel to those fiery tortures which¹⁾ he analysed and gloated over."

No wonder then that a light glimmered from the physician's²⁾ eyes, "burning blue and ominous, like the reflection of a furnace."

As Robert Colwan had haunted George, and as he himself was later haunted by the fiend, so young Mr Dimmesdale had a constant shadow at his elbow.

"But it was the constant shadow of my presence - the closest propinquity of the man whom he had most vilely wronged! - and - who had grown to exist only by this perpetual poison of the direst revenge! Yea, indeed! - he did not err! - there was a fiend at his elbow! A mortal man, with once a human heart, /

1) *The Scarlet Letter*. p. 202
2) " " p. 152.

heart, has become a fiend for his especial torment." ¹⁾

"The Scarlet Letter" is a powerful book, and owes much to Bunyan, to Lockhart and to Hogg. Perhaps however, it demands a greater art to portray the devil convincingly in mortal surroundings, than it does to trace, however poignantly, the transformation of human emotions into those of a fiend.

1) The Scarlet Letter. p. 204.

VII

The tenets of faith expressed by the sinner in the Confessions, though Calvinistic in origin and deeply rooted in the worst of the old Scottish theological tradition, appeared in Hogg's life-time in modified form, in Whitefield's Calvinist evangelicalism. On this point John Wesley felt himself bound to define and defend these tenets, as they appeared in Methodist teaching. In his earlier days, Wesley had asserted - "Faith impels assurance! an assurance of the love of God to our souls,¹⁾ of His being now reconciled to us."

In old age, he modified this:- "When fifty years ago, my brother Charles and I, in the simplicity of our hearts, taught the people that unless they knew their sins were forgiven, they were under the wrath and worse of God, I marvel they did not stone us. The Methodists, I hope, know better now. We preach assurance, as we always did, as a common privilege of the children of God, but we do not enforce it under pain of²⁾ damnation denounced on all who enjoy it not."

Contemporary readers of the Confessions would recognize the old insidious creed of the doctrine of the elect, which had so poisoned the spiritual life of Scotland in the early 18th century and had vitiated national energy and corrupted morals. They would remember too, the modifications this faith had undergone in the more humane preaching of Wesley and his followers.

Thus James Hogg derived the elements of his masterly tale from traditionary sources - the devil (that was real) from the /

1) Wesley and Whitefield in Scotland - Rev. D. Butler, p. 90.

2) Overton's Life of Wesley, p. 84.

the folk tale and legend of his own country; the bitter per-
:fervid religion - that had soured much that was good and whole-
:some in the spirit of the nation, from the old Calvinistic
beliefs. He was at home with both of these themes, and in his
"Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner" proves his own
words:-

"When my tale is traditionary, the work is easy, as
I then see my way before me."¹⁾

1) The Domestic Life and Manners of Sir Walter Scott,
James Hogg, p. 80.

VIII

THE BROWNIE OF BODSBECK.

The fourth of this group of Scottish novels, linked in theme with the Terror Novel, is a Border tale - "The Brownie of Bodsbeck". Sir Herbert Grierson classes this tale under the heading "Romances of Magicians and Devils" along with Godwin's "St Leon", Shelley's "St. Irvyne" or the "Rosicrucian" the inaugurator of the type being Schiller with his "Der Geister-¹⁾seher".

Scott himself recognized that Hogg's ghost stories were in the "Terror" vogue.

"I assure you it's no little gars auld Donald pegh' but yon Lewis stories of yours frightened me so much that I could not sleep, and now I have been trying my hand on one,²⁾ and here it is."

The novel referred to was "The Monastery", which with the "The Abbot" and "Old Mortality", covered the period set forth by John Galt in one novel, "Ringan Gilhaize". Hogg does not attempt the historic panorama from the Reformation in Scotland to the days of the persecuted Covenanters, but sets his story only in one part of that epoch, the time of the persecution (1685-8). Thus "The Brownie of Bodsbeck" has the same historical setting as "Old Mortality" and the second part of "Ringan Gilhaize".

But /

1) The Scott Lectures, No.II. History and the Novel. University of Edinburgh Journal Vol.XI. No.2., p. 82.

2) Domestic Life and Manners of Sir Walter Scott, p.97. by James Hogg

But "The Brownie of Bodsbeck", as has been said, is of the "Romances of Magicians and Devils" order, while "Old Mortality" and "Ringan Gilhaize" set out to be sober historical novels. Scott indeed was seriously displeased at what he regarded in the Brownie as a "distorted, prejudiced and untrue" view of the Royalist party. The shepherd defended himself heartily, saying that the Brownie was "a devilish deal truer" than "Old Mortality", and that the picture of the Royalist party was the one he had received from tradition.¹⁾

From tradition too came the legendary and supernatural elements of the tale. Hogg knew what the author of "Ringan Gilhaize" thought about ghosts and brownies, especially in an historical novel, for Galt, writing to him in February 1830 and asking for a contribution to Fraser's Magazine, chaffs him:-

"I foregathered with some of your kith and kin in Canada - decent folk. One remarkable thing in the American woods is their entire freedom from fairies and all sorts of hobgoblins."

However there was no doubt that Hogg's contemporaries, the reading public of the time, less scholarly than Walter Scott, more romantically minded than Galt, enjoyed his ghosts: -

..... "indeed the shepherd is always at home in the clouds and darkness of superstition. He speaks of ghosts like a man who believes in them - and whoever passed his infancy among the hills without seeing spirits?"²⁾

The /

1) Domestic Life and Manners of Sir Walter Scott by James Hogg.
2) Blackwood Vol. vii. p. 148, May 1820.

The Border country seemed to engender tales of the supernatural since the days of True Thomas of Ercildoune. Hogg cared to preserve genuine old ballads as keenly as Scott and helped the latter in his collection of the Border Minstrelsy; moreover by descent, he was a Border peasant, with the peasant mind, which is close to the mind that evolved the ballads. Therefore, he could at moments, capture with rare purity, the cadence of the ballad, as in Kilmeny, and the best of his tales may be regarded as the modern equivalent in prose, of the old ballad narratives.

There is the same love of the strange, often the same naivety, but alas, only rarely, the untaught artistry of the unknown ballad writers.

As a novel "The Brownie of Bodsbeck" is hardly on the scale of "The Confessions"; it is really only an expanded tale with some fine things in it; and it is not surprising that the germ of the tale is to be found in the old ballad - Mass John Binram.

"The Brownie of Bodsbeck" was in the making in 1816, though not published until 1818 in a two volume collection. Thus "The Brownie" was composed though not published before "Old Mortality". "Ringan Gilhaize" followed in 1823, and was, as¹⁾ Galt admitted, certainly suggested by Sir Walter's novel.

1) Literary Life, John Galt, Vol. 1. pp.250-258.

The tale is simple enough, though entangled to the point of incoherence by Hogg. In the Autumn of 1685, John Graham, Viscont of Dundee, better known as Clavers, let loose his savage troopers on the southern counties of Ayr, Galloway and Dumfries, with orders to dispense conventicles and destroy their supporters. Walter Laidlaw, tenant of Chapelhope, discovered on his own moors, up to one hundred and thirty fugitives. The shooting of the priest at the Kirk of St. Mary of the Lowes, a noted informer to the prelatist party, brought Dundee to Traquair. Troops were stationed across country; one detachment in the pass of Moffatdale cut off access to the western counties.

In such a strait, Walter advised his band of fugitives to repair to a common beyond the hill of Gensope. Meanwhile his daughter Kate, a lovely and intelligent girl was reported to have been seen at midnight in the Hope, with a small crooked creature. Whispers of the presence of the Brownie of Bodsbeck flashed round the country. Walter's wife, Maron Linton, a weak-minded, superstitious woman was convinced that her daughter had been bewitched and summoned the new curate, Clark, to exorcise the evil spirit.

Kate occupied a room at Chapelhope, adjoining the parlour, which opened into the "Old Room", an outshot from the back of the house. It was from this old room that strange sounds were heard by Walter and his household through the night. The upshot was that all the servants packed up and departed save one elderly woman, Agnes Alexander better known as Nancy Elshinder who had been hired at Moffat in the fair called The Third /

Third Friday, who spoke much to herself and chanted snatches of old songs. Kate tried to sound her on her principles, prelatie or for the Covenant, but could make little of her.

Next day, Clavers, with fifty dragoons arrived at Chapelhope to inquire into the death of the curate, and also into the killing of five soldiers in a pass nearby.

As a result of his visit, all were interrogated. Walter's old shepherd, John of the Muckraw was mutilated, the two boys, brutally intimidated, and Walter himself borne away to Edinburgh for trial.

During her husband's absence, Maron Linton sends the new curate to deal with her enchanted daughter, who is rescued from this Clerk's dishonourable schemes, by a small shrunken old man - the Brownie of Bodsbeck.

Kate then, having received word from her father, to apply for help to the laird of Drummelzier, on whose lands stood Chapelhope, decided to entrust old Nanny with the mission of admitting one or two fugitive Whigs into the house every night, until her return. Nanny, as token of her integrity, had disclosed to Kate's horrified gaze, her cropped ears and cheek indented with a hot iron.

When Kate returned from her errand however, she found Chapelhope deserted; her mother was staying with relations, Mass John borne off by the fairies; old Nanny residing at Riskinhope. Kate's mother had prevailed on the curate to sleep in the old room and free it from the presence of the Brownie. Old Nanny, while waiting for her expected Whigs, on hearing half-stifled howls issuing from the room had run outside to peer in at the back through /

through a broken shutter. From this position, she perceived a ring of creatures round the curate's bed and an empty coffin in the corner. When the Brownie, who was in the centre of the crowd turned round suddenly and she beheld its face, she swooned.

Eventually, after imprisonment and trial, Walter is released through the help of powerful friends and makes his way home again. On nearing Chapelhope, he is stopped close to his house, by a strange figure who warns him to proceed no farther. Though terrified, Walter persists on his way, and on seeing a light glimmering through the shutters of the "Auld Room", he too, peers through only to see the horrid spectacle of his daughter Kate with a corpse stretched across her knees, and the ill-favoured Brownie at her side. At this, Walter too nearly swoons, but eventually makes his way to the house of one of his tenants, Davie Tait of Riskinhope.

Next day, he again returned to Chapelhope, to interview his daughter, who on learning of her father's adventures and hearing from him that the persecution of the Whigs was soon to cease, besought him to accompany her to the linn on the South Grain, where Clavers five soldiers had been slain. Followed by her father, she scrambled across the face of the rock to a little platform, where pulling at the heather, she disclosed a door, wattled with green heath.

In a cave here, had dwelled John Brown, a desperate Cameronian refugee from Bothwell Bridge, with one remaining son and some of his own associates. A wound in the back, received at the battle of Bothwell Bridge, and a hacking cut from a dragoon's sword, had severed the tendons in his back. Months in /

in a Glasgow garret, with no skilled attention, had resulted in his deformity; his wife had been borne off to prison; his sons all perished save one, James, who, dangerously wounded, had only recovered, through Kate's ministrations, for she, braving her father's possible disapproval and an ill-name in the countryside for her midnight ramblings, had succoured these sorely persecuted refugees. Nanny's terror at sight of the supposed Brownie was natural, for he was no other than her husband, but so hideously deformed as to be almost unrecognizable.

Walter, proud of his daughter's humanity, bears the sufferers home to Chapelhope, there to be given shelter and nursed back to health!

After these harrowing adventures, the inmates of Chapelhope are left in peace, and Walter's reputation and honour wax great in the countryside.

Thus the Brownie of Bodsbeck is mainly concerned with the attitude of an honest Border farmer, no Covenanter himself, to the persecuted party, and his growing sympathy with them, not as a zealot, but as a human being, pitying the lot of his brethern and experiencing himself, barbarous treatment from the prelatic royalists, the party, to which his own loyalties by heredity, were owed.

Scott, in "Old Mortality", was in a way too, considering the religious differences of the time from the point of view of his moderate hero. Young Henry Morton, however, was no unlettered Border farmer, but a gentleman of breeding and education, of a non-conformist line; he is not a pronounced Covenanter at the opening /

opening of the novel, but a series of circumstances induce him to join their ranks. He personally meets with generous, even chivalrous treatment from the royalist side, from the Lord Evandale, his rival for the hand of the fair Edith Bellemore. This aristocratic behaviour, in the best tradition, was in accordance with Scott's notions. Henry Morton becomes a sympathiser with the Covenanters through his own convictions and not only through his feelings, as was the case with Walter Laidlaw.

In "Ringan Gilhaize," the hero is a fiery Covenanter, grandson of the Gilhaize that was so staunch a Presbyterian in the reign of the Scots Queen Mary; to him, the other side stood for the Anti-Christ and from them, no quarter could be expected. If one of the prelatic party shows mercy, it is due to a cast of grace given to him as a sinful man, and not shown in the character of one participant in the religious war to another.

However the dice was loaded against the Covenanters; they had fallen out of fashion in early nineteenth century reading circles, for their beliefs were too radical for that conservative society, who were nervous at any implied criticism of government, after the failure of the French experiment in liberty, equality and fraternity. Thus Henry Morton is disgusted at the wranglings of the extremist in Old Mortality, and Hogg makes fun of Davie Tait's "strong nasal Cameronian whine".¹⁾ It was left to Galt to champion their cause with enthusiasm and indiscretion; as a result, he departed from his usual province and plunged into a period of history that would furnish /

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck. p. 273.

furnish an antidote for Jacobite romance. As in his sketches "The Gathering of the West" and "The Steamboat", wherein he poked sly fun at the farcical pageantry of George IV's visit to Edinburgh, in Ringan Gilhaize, he tilted against the old blind loyalties which Scott was attempting to evoke; and also against the aristocrat's attitude towards the persecuted hill-folk. In the sketches he presented these Tory loyalties ludicrously as "cauld kale het again"; in Ringan Gilhaize, he was issuing a serious challenge. Inevitably he failed; the novel as such was doomed, however much he preened himself on it, but nevertheless he achieved some remarkable effects.

But Hogg, as well as Galt portrays the prelatie side as inhumanly cruel and rapacious: Hogg, because he had received that impression from stories rife in the countryside; Galt, because he thought he was correcting the balance upset by Scott's prejudice in *Old Mortality*, "in which I thought he treated the defenders of the Presbyterian Church with too much levity, and not according to my impressions derived from the history of that time."¹⁾ The pompous undercurrent in this, as in other remarks on literary criticism, drew the ridicule of his contemporaries.

It must be admitted however, that Scott's picture of the Covenanting preachers, leaders and their adherents, shows them to be either ludicrous and uncouth like Kettledrummy and Poundtext, or sombre, dour and fanatical, like Burley. Perhaps he found the Presbyterian clergy eccentric as did Lockhart.

On /

1) Lit. Life 250 - 258 John Galt.

On the other hand, Scott was offended at the portrayal of Clavers in Hogg's novel, because his sympathies were royalist and aristocratic. The third man concerned in this theme - Galt, was equally annoyed at the ridicule cast on the Covenanters by a descendant of that Scott of Harden, who was fined 40,000 pounds Scots for allowing his wife to be a Presbyterian.

In Galt's case too, there was perhaps a secret satisfaction at challenging the author of the Waverley Novels on his own ground. Certainly Galt made a fair stand, and even consulted Covenanter authors. He had, too, his own covenanting ancestors, John Galt of Gateside, banished to Carolina in 1684, and William Galt of Wark, proscribed in the same year. To stir his sympathy even more deeply, Galt had recollections of the Buchanites, marching through the Western counties in his childhood, to the accompaniment of psalms and hymns. In Ringan Gilhaize, he shows that versatility that made him ready to try any new project. Historical fiction was not his chief medium, for in that he could not reveal his mastery at portraying provincial character and droll humour; the historical subject was too dignified; the canvas was too large. Ringan Gilhaize was on too big a scale, too full of stirring events for minute characterisation: too elegant in tone for waggery, so that it says much for Galt that he was able to achieve even that measure of success which he did.

Nor was historical fiction in Hogg's vein: his tale, shrouded in a mist of legend and Border prejudice, is rich only for its atmosphere and its inset sketches of Border characters.

To /

To begin with, the idea of the Brownie, as has been mentioned, was traditional. A letter from the Rev. Mr. Knox to the Rev. Mr. Wyllie in the latter part of the 17th century, mentions the creature:-

"They are they whom the vulgar call white devils, which possibly have neither so much power nor malice as the black ones have, which served our great grandfathers under the names of Brownie and Robin Goodfellow: and to this day, make dayly service¹⁾ to severals in quality of familiars."

The same reverend gentleman goes on to relate how a lady of the "West marches, 'twixt England and us" had one, whom she named Elbert, which always appeared in her presence, when she was alone, in the shape of a "little old fellow".

In Davie Tait's house at Riskinhope, the inmates had no doubts as to the reality of the Brownie and their superstitious fear forms one of the most ludicrous episodes in the book; for that is a feature of the tale, no matter how grim are the events, Hogg finds means of introducing droll anecdotes, such as a Border farmer might tell to his neighbours round the fire on a winter night.

The family at Riskinhope believe that they have seen the Brownie walk into their firelit house. For protection, Davie "on all four at full gallop took shelter in the farthest corner" of a little milkhouse at the other end of the house. "All the rest were soon above him, but Davie bore the oppressive weight without a murmur."²⁾ Nanny soon followed with a lighted lamp /

1) The Rev. R. Law's Memorials - p. lxxiv
 2) The Brownie of Bodsbeck. Vol. I. p. 277, Edin. 1818.

lamp and bolted the door.

"Dear bairns, what did ye see that has putten ye a'
 1)
 this gate?"

"Lord sauf us!" cried Davie, from below, "we hae
 forspoke the Brownie - tak that elbow out o' my guts a wee bit.
 They say, if ye speak o' the deil, he'll appear. 'Tis an
 unsonsy and dangerous thing to - Wha's aught that knee? slack
 it a little, God guide us, sirs, there's the weight of a millstane
 on aboon the links o' my neck. If the Lord hae forsaken us,
 an' winna heed our prayers, we may gie up a' for tint thegither!
 Nanny, hae ye boltit the door."

"Ay hae I, firm an' fast."

"Than muve up a wee, sirs, or faith I'm gane - Hech-
 howe! the weight o' sin an' mortality that's amang ye."

At length, though panting with terror, Davie succumbs
 to his wife Maysey's plea to "tak the beuk like a man, an'
 2)
 put the fence o' scripture faith round us for that too."

The result is one of the best passages in the tale -
 Davie Tait's prayer strongly reminiscent in flavour of Lucky
 Shaw's Tale in "The Confessions", and not far out from being a
 reproduction to the life, of the language and idiom used by
 certain Border shepherds and characters, whose doings and
 sayings Hogg had heard recited at many a convivial gathering
 of his friends and employers, the Laidlaws, and the like.

"But the last time we gathered oursels before thee,
 we /

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck, Vol. I. p. 278. Edin. 1818

2) " " " p. 283.

we left out a wing o' the hirsel by mistake, an' thou hast paid
 us hame i' our ain coin. Thou wast sae gude than as come to the
 sheddin thysel, an' clap our heads, an' whisper i' our lugs,
 'dinna be disheartened, my puir bits o' waefu' things, for
 though ye be the shotts o' my hale fauld, I'll tak care o' ye,
 an' herd ye, an' gie ye a' that he hae askit o' me the night'.
 It was kind, an' thou hast done it; but we forgot a principal
 part, an' maun tell thee now, that we have had another visitor
 sin' ye war here, an' ane wha's back we wad rather see than his
 face. Thou kens better thysel than we can tell thee what
 place he has made his escape frae; but we sair dread it is frae
 the boddomless pit, or he wadna hae ta'en possession but leave.
 Ye ken, that gang tried to keep vilent leasehaud o' your ain
 fields, an' your ain ha', till ye gae them a killicoup. If he
 be ane o' them, O come thysel to our help, an' bring in thy hand
 a bolt o' divine vengeance, het i' the furnace o' thy wrath as
 reed as a nailstring, an' bizz an' scouder him till ye dinna
 leave him the likeness of a paper izel, until he be glad to
 creep into the worm-holes o' the earth, never to see sun or
 sterner mair. But, if it be some puir dumbfounded soul that
 has been bumbased and stoundit at the view o' the lang Hopes an'
 the Dounfa's o' Eternity comed daundering away frae about the
 laiggen girds o' Heaven to the waefu' gang that he left behind,
 like a lost sheep that strays frae the rich pastures o' the
 south, an' comes bleating back a' the gate to its cauld native
 hills to the very gair where it was lambed and first followed
 its minny, ane canna help haeing a fellow-feeling wi' the puir
 soul /

soul after a', but yet he'll find himsel here like a cow in an unco loan. Therefore, O furnish him this night wi' the wings o' the wild gainer or the eagle, that he may swoop away back to a better hame than this, for we want nane o' his company. An' do thou give to the puir stray thing a weel-hained heff and a beildy lair, that he may nae mair come straggling amang a stock that's sae unlike himsel that they're frightit at the very look o' him."

The only character in the tale, whom Scott admired was Nanny. She has just that uncanny touch of the weird woman, at which Hogg was such an adept. "She was a character not easily to be comprehended. She spoke much to herself, but little to any other person - worked so hard that she seldom looked up, and all the while sung scraps of old songs and ballads, the import of which it was impossible to understand; but she often chaunted these with a pathos that seemed to flow¹⁾ from the heart, and that never failed to affect the hearer.

This old woman in her russet gown, clouted shoes and crimped coif, of wandering mind and startled manner had, in her day, suffered torture, and her experiences had given her a touch of the prophetess.

"Many a water as weel as the Clyde has run reid wi' blude, an' that no sae lang sin' syne - ay, an' the wild burnies too! I hae seen them mysel leave a reid strip on the sand an' the grey stanes - but the hoody crow durstna peck there! - Dear bairn /

bairn has the Chapelhope itsel never had the hue?"¹⁾

Through her crazed snatches of talk to herself, overheard by Kate, Hogg gives us a grim sidelight on the Killing time. Having heard Nannie chant the following:-

"Graeme will gang ower the brink,
Down wi' a flaughter;
Lagg an' Drumlandrick
Will soon follow after
Johnston and Lithgow,
Bruce and Macleary,
Scowder their harigalds,
Deils, wi' a bleery." 2)

Kate began to suspect that there was more in Nanny's mind than had yet been made manifest. Struck with this thought and ruminating upon it, she continued standing in the same position, and heard Nanny "sometimes crooning, and at other times talking rapidly and fervently to herself. After much incoherent matter, lines of psalms, etc. Katharine heard with astonishment the following questions and answers, in which two distinct voices were imitated:-

"Were you at the meeting of the traitors at Lanark on the 12th of January?"

"I never was amang traitors that I was certain of till this day - Let them take that! bloody fruesome beasts."

"Were you at Lanark on that day?"

"If you had been there you would have seen."

"D-n the old b - ! Burn her with matches - squeeze her with pincers as long as there's a whole piece of her together - then throw her into prison, and let her lie there till she rot - the /

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck. p. 98
2) " " p.102.

the old wrinkled hag of h - ! Good woman, I pity you; you shall yet go free if you will tell us where you last saw Hamilton and your own goodman."

"Ye sall hing me up by the tongue first, and cut me a' in collops while I'm hinging."

"Burn her in the cheek, cut baith her lugs out, and¹⁾ let her gae to h - her own way."

Thus Hogg gave his readers an idea of the coarseness and savagery of the times.

Next morning, Nanny is questioned by Clavers and his officers, and her replies unlike those proud and spirited answers of her previous examination, stave off with pawky humour, all further interrogation.

- "Now try me, master doctor - I'll nouthier renounce ae thing that he bid me, nor answer ae question that he speer²⁾ at me."

"In the first place, then, my good hearty dame, do you acknowledge or renounce the Covenants?"

"Aha! he's wise wha wats that, an' as daft that speers."

"Ay, or no in a moment - No juggling with me, old Mrs Skinflint."

"I'll tell ye what ye do, master - , if ony body speer at ye, gin auld Nanny i' the Chapelhope renounces the Covenant, shake your head an' say ye dinna ken."

"And pray, my very beautiful girl, what do you keep this old tattered book for?"

"For a fancy to gar fools speer an' ye're the first -

Come /

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck, p.103.

2) " " p.110.

Come on now, sir, wi' your catechis - Wally - dye man! gin ye be nae better a fighter than ye're an examiner, ye may gie up the craft."

'Bruce here bit his lip. and looked so stern that Nanny, with a hysterical laugh, ran away from him, and took shelter behind Clavers.'

Although Nanny never reaches the stature of Madge Wildfire, she is of the same race of half-crazed prophetess; she was however a decent townswoman, whom misfortune, even tragedy in the loss of her sons on the scaffold, had transformed into an eccentric; she had none of the real gipsy in her blood as had Madge. There is real pathos in her story as she tells it to Katharine:-

"Ay, dear bairn, weel may ye stare and raise up your hands that gate: but when ye hear my tale, ye winna wonder that my poor wits are uprooted. Suppose sic a case your ain - suppose you had been the bosom companion o' ane for twenty years - had joined wi' him in devotion, e'ening and morning, for a' that time, and had never heard a sigh but for sin, nor a complaint but of the iniquities of the land - If ye had witnessed him follow two comely sons, your own flesh and blood, to the scaffold, and bless his God who put it in their hearts to stand and suffer for his cause, and for the crown of martyrdom he had bestowed on them, and bury the mangled bodies of other two with tears, but not with repining - If, after a' this, he had been hunted as a partridge on the mountains, and for the same dear cause, the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus, had laid down his life - If you knew that his grey head was hung upon the city wall /

wall for a spectacle to gaze at, and his trunk buried in the wild by strangers - Say you knew all this, and had all these dear ties in your remembrance, and yet, after long years of hope soon to join their blest society above, to see again that loved and revered form stand before your eyes on earth at midnight, shrivelled, pale and deformed and mixed with malevolent spirits on dire and revengeful intent, where wad your hope - where wad your confidence - or where wad your wits hae been flown? Here she cried bitterly.¹⁾"

However, even in portraying Claverhouse and Walter's unfortunate contact with him, Hogg seems to be constantly contrasting the unconscious naïve innocence and drollery of the Border folk, with the deliberately provocative policy of the proud and irascible Grahame, who often wilfully misunderstood their simple loyalties, both to their King and to their fellow-man. Thus, some of the incidents are tinged with pathos by the simplicity of the shepherds and farmers, but their dealings with Claverhouse are often robbed of terror by ludicrous suggestion. In fact, the vagrant Kennedy and Jasper, son to old John of the Muckraw, both of whom have misadventures with Brownie on the moss, old John himself, and Walter's guard, Sergeant Daniel Roy Macpherson, fulfil the same function in the Brownie of Bodsbeck, as does Cuddie Headrigg and old Mause in Old Mortality.

Walter is the Borderer par excellence, stalwart and manly, in bodily strength a magnificent giant, who towered above Clavers and the other King's officers. He is best depicted on that misty Autumn day upon the moors, when he stumbles across the /

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck, p. 266.

the fugitives. Thinking the two men whom he had discovered in a deep hag were menacing him, he overpowers them, and in the fighting, breaks the arm of one.

'Od, sir! he hadna weel begun to speak till the light o' truth began to dawn within me like the brek o' day - sky an' I grew as red too, for the devil needna' hae envied me my feelings at that time. I couldna' help saying to mysel, "Whow, whow, Wat Laidlaw! but ye hae made a bonny job o't this morning! - Here's twa puir creatures, worn out wi' famine and watching, come to seek 'a last refuge amang your hags and mosses, and ye maun fa' to and be pelting and threshing on them like an incarnate devil as ye are - Oh, wae's me! wae's me! - Lord, sir, I thought my heart wad burst - "¹⁾

Tender heartedness towards suffering and deep affection for his daughter "Keatie", who was of the same nature as her father were two of Walter's chief characteristics.

At his trial, when he takes Macpherson's advice to show "great and proud offence at some of their questions and their proofs" and "to send them all to hell in one pody,"²⁾ Walter is grand and outfaces Moray and the "bluidy" Mackenzie together, much to the honest sergeant's delight.

The latter is treated in pure burlesque - the Highlander riding on his hobby horse of genealogy. He speaks of "old freebooters as the greatest af all kings."³⁾ When Walter tells him, that there is not a man of his own name above himself, Macpherson bursts out:-

"Fwat /

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck. p. 44.
 2) " " p. 240
 3) " " p. 181.

"Fwat? Cot's everlasting plessing! are you te chief of t
 clan, M'Leadle? Then, sir, you are a shentleman indeed. Though
 your clan should pe never so poor, you are a shentleman; and
 you must pe giving me your hand; and you need not think any
 shame to pe giving me your hand; for hersel pe a shentleman
 pred and porn, and first coosin to Cluny Macpherson's sister-
 in-law. Who te deal dhu more she pe this clan, M'Leadle?
 She must pe of Macleane. She ance pe prhother to ourselves,
 but fell into great dishunity by the preaking off of
 Finlay Gorm. More Machalabin Macleane of Ilanterach and
 1)
 Ardnamurchan."

Graham himself is first presented with great indignity,
 Baffled by the stupidity of Maron Linton, he rudely clasps
 Katherine, only to be hauled away by the mighty grasp of her
 father.

"He was at least a foot taller than any of them,
 and nearly as wide round the chest as them both. In one
 moment his immense fingers grasped both their slender necks,
 almost meeting behind each of their windpipes" "Walter
 wheeled them about to the light, and looked alternately at each
 of them, without quitting or even slackening his hold.

'Callants, wha ir ye awa? - or what's the meanin' o'
 a' this unmercifu' rampaging?'

Sir Thomas gave his name in a hoarse and broken voice;
 but Clavers, whose nape Walter's right hand embraced, and whose
 rudeness to his daughter had set his mountain-blood a-boiling,
 could not answer a word. Walter, slackening his hold somewhat,
 waited for an answer, but none coming - '

"Wha /

'Wha ir ye, I say, ye bit useless weazel-blawn like urf that ye're?'

The haughty and insolent Clavers was stung with rage; but seeing no immediate redress was to be had, he endeavoured to pronounce his dreaded name, but it was in a whisper scarcely audible, and stuck in his throat - 'Jo o - Graham' said he.

'Jock Graham do they ca' ye? - Ye're but an unmannerly whalp, man. And ye're baith King's officers too! - Weel, I'll tell ye what it is, my denty clever callants; if it wasna for the blood that's i' your master's veins, I wad¹⁾ nite your twa bits o' pows thegither.' "

"At this time, the word of Argyle's rising had already spread, and Clavers actually traversed the country more like an exterminating angel, than a commander of a civilized²⁾ army."

Even his physical appearance and manner had in them something fearful.

"Clavers turned his deep grey eye upon them, which more than the eye of any human being resembled that of a serpent - offence gleamed in it."³⁾

His manner, in Hogg's tale, is the traditional one⁴⁾ accorded to him - "feigned deference and servility" alternating with abandoned outbursts of wrath.

However, during the height of his villainy at Chapelhope /

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck, p. 115.
 2) " " " p. 119
 3) " " " p. 125
 4) " " " p. 125

Chapelhope, when questioning John Hay of Muckraw about the Rev. James Renwick, one of the extremist preachers, about the Conventicles and the death of his five soldiers in a Linn nearby, Clavers is foiled by the bucolic character of his prisoner. It is a famous passage

"How did it appear to you that they had been slain? Were they cut with swords, or pierced with bullets?"

"I canna say, but they war sair hashed."

"How do you mean when you say they were hashed?"

"Champit-like - a' brozled and jurmummled, as it war."

"Do you mean that they were cut, or cloven, or minced?"

"Na, na - no that ava - But they had gotten some sair doofs - They had been terribly paikit and daddit wi" something."

"I do not in the least conceive what you mean."

"That's extrordnar, man - can ye no understand folk's mother-tongue? - I'll mak it plain to you. Ye see, whan a thing comes on ye that gate, that's a dadd-sit still now. Then a paik, that's a swapp or a skelp like - when a thing comes on ye that way, that's a paik. But a doof's warst ava ' - it's " -

"Prithee hold; I now understand it all perfectly
1)
well - "

At Walter's trial too, Clavers is balked of his prey. It is quite clear that Hogg was much more interested in displaying the traits of his Border folk, their eccentricities of tongue and of custom, than he was in analysing the strange character of Claverhouse, or in presenting a historic portrait. In /

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck. pp. 134 and 135.

In no sense, could *The Brownie* be called a historical novel proper, when clowning and burlesque play such a part in it. Hogg, however, tells us where he gathered his material concerning Claverhouse:-

"Moreover, the way in which he threatened and maltreated children, and mocked and insulted women not to mention more brutal usage of them, proved him at once to be destitute of the behaviour and feelings becoming a man, far less those of a gentleman. He seemed to regard all the common-
:alty in the south and west of Scotland as things to be mocked and insulted at pleasure, as being created only for the sport of him and his soldiers, while their mental and bodily agonies were his delight. The narrator of this tale confesses that he has taken this account of his raid through the vales of Esk and Annan solely from tradition, as well as the attack made on the two conventicles, where the Pringles, etc, were taken prisoners; but these traditions are descended from such a source, and by such a line, as amounts with him to veracity." ¹⁾

More modern commentators, taking the view of Scott, are not content with traditionary tales or prejudiced authors.

"The traditional Claverhouse of Wodrow, Howie, Defoe, and their unquestioning modern disciple, Macaulay, is familiar. 'Murdered by Bloody Clavers' is the conventional epitaph of rebel martyrs in whose death he had no particle of share. 'Bloody' in disposition he was not. Of the refinement of cruelty which condemned the Wigton martyrs to a lingering death there is in Claverhouse not a trace. The conclusion is insistent /

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck p. 236.

insistent, that had he died plain John Graham of Claverhouse, and not Viscount of Dundee, the one availing personality in Scotland in militant sympathy with the discredited policy of a despot whose champion he was, 'Bloody' Clavers had never been created to confound 'Bonnie' Dundee, and the tombstones of murdered martyrs had been purer for lack of the conventional libel of him.¹⁾"

In Ringan Gilhaize, Claverhouse is a byword; through his authority, unutterable atrocities are committed, but as a figure, he appears but little in the novel; rather, he is used as the instrument for revenge due from the family of Gilhaize to the Prelatic party for over one hundred years. At the battle of Drumclog, Ringan nearly takes him prisoner:-

"We had now loaded again, and the second fire was more deadly than the first. Our horsemen also seeing how the dragoons were scattered, fell in the confusion as it were man for man upon them. Claverhouse raged and commanded, but no one now could or would obey. In that extremity his horse was killed, and, being thrown down, I ran forward to seize him, if I could, prisoner: but he still held his sword in his hand, and rising as I came up, used it manfully, and with one stroke almost hued my right arm from my shoulder. As he fled I attempted for a moment to follow, but staggered and fell. He looked back as he escaped, and I cried - 'Blood for blood';²⁾ and it has been so, as I shall hereafter relate."

Little /

1) John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee - by Professor Sanford Terry, p. 212. London, 1905.

2) Ringan Gilhaize, Vol II, p. 175.

Little is given of him as a man, but tribute is paid to his soldierly qualities.

"Providence led me to fall in with this person one morning, as we were standing among a crowd of onlookers, seeing Claverhouse reviewing his men in the front court of Holyroodhouse. I happened to remark, for in sooth it must be so owned, that the Viscount had a brave though a proud look, and that his voice had the manliness of one ordained to command."¹⁾

Ringan's very dreams are haunted by "the proud and exulting visage of Dundee,"²⁾ until the Battle of Killiecrankie, when, with a supreme effort, old Ringan at last slays his foe.

The fullest presentation of Clavers is given in "Old Mortality". The Brownie was concerned only with his impact on Chapelhope, a typical Border farm, and more generally, with his raids on the Border; Ringan Gilhaize depicted the burnings and hangings that the party for which he stood had perpetrated, and regarded him as the prototype of that party: one to be feared, moreover, for his ability as a leader.

In Old Mortality, Claverhouse is seen among his own people, and those of his own rank, a keen, handsome man, and a shrewd judge of mankind. Scott gives us a full-length canvas and handles the character with a sureness of touch, that makes Hogg's and Galt's Claverhouse, a mere shadow.

"Graham of Claverhouse was in the prime of life, rather low of stature, and slightly, though elegantly, formed: his gesture, language, and manners, were those of one whose life had /

1) Ringan Gilhaize, Vol II. p. 304.

2) " Vol, II.p. 310.

had been spent among the noble and the gay. His features exhibited even feminine regularity. An oval face, a straight and well-formed nose, dark hazel eyes, a complexion just sufficiently tinged with brown to save it from the charge of effeminacy, a short upper lip, curved upwards like that of a Grecian statue, and slightly shaded by small mustachios of light brown, joined to a profusion of long curled locks of the same colour, which fell down on each side of his face, contributed to form such a countenance as limners love to paint and ladies to look upon.

The severity of his character, as well as the higher attributes of undaunted and enterprising valour which even his enemies were compelled to admit, lay concealed under an exterior which seemed adapted to the court or the saloon rather than to the field. The same gentleness and gaiety of expression which reigned in his features seemed to inspire his actions and gestures; and on the whole, he was generally esteemed, at first sight, rather qualified to be the votary of pleasure than of ambition. But under this soft exterior was hidden a spirit unbounded in daring and in aspiring, yet cautious and prudent as that of Machiavel himself. Profound in politics, and imbued, of course, with that disregard for individual rights which its intrigues usually generate, this leader was cool and collected in danger, fierce and ardent in pursuing success, careless of facing death himself, and ruthless in afflicting it upon others. Such are the characters formed in times of civil discord, when the highest qualities, perverted by party spirit, /

spirit, and inflamed by habitual opposition, are too often combined with vices and excesses which deprive them at once of their merit and of their lustre."¹⁾

The romance of his appearance as described by Scott, reminds us of the Jacobite songs, sung in honour of Bonnie Dundee. "Old Mortality" is full of touches that supplement the large portrait. "Claverhouse saw his nephew fall. He turned his eye on Evandale while a transitory glance of indescribable emotion disturbed, for a second's space, the serenity of his features, and briefly said - 'You see the event' "²⁾

In the heat of the battle even, he remembered the name of every man in his regiment, and the voice that was so modulated in drawing-rooms, was a silver trumpet above the din of the fray. In him was an indestructible calm.

As for the presentation of the Covenanters in the three novels, again Scott gives us the most ample picture: for he presents a whole cross-section, ranging from the most timorous to the most fanatical. There are the humorous wranglings of the doubtful Cuddie with his zealous Mother, old Mause, whose loyalty is torn between the Covenant and her ancient service to the house of Bellenden; the ludicrous Gabriel Kettledrummy and Poundtext, the insane Mucklewrath whose very names suggest ridicule; the fiery and devoted ~~Macbriar~~ who suffers torture and death for his faith, and dwarfing all, the terrifying figure of Balfour of Burley, their military leader. Henry Morton, the moderate /

1) Old Mortality, Edinburgh 1871. p. 131

2) " " " p. 172.

moderate, attracted by the just demands of the afflicted, joins the Covenanters, only to leave them, when he discovers their disharmony and fanaticism. The paradox reaches a climax, when Claverhouse, who had once condemned Morton to die, rescues him from a group of the deserted, who had designed to slay him, in cold blood, as an apostate,

By far the most sympathetic portrayal of the Covenanters is that given by Galt in the person of Ringan Gilhaize: their sincere piety, endurance and loyalty are described in strangely haunting cadence. The Brownie contains a few slight sketches of the Covenanting fugitives, particularly that of John Brown, husband of Nanny, the redoubtable Brownie himself. The language used by the Covenanters as reproduced in part by Hogg and Scott, and throughout by Galt, in Ringan Gilhaize, that curious blend of Scots and Old Testament phrase, is powerfully manipulated by all three authors, but with most curious effect in Galt's novel. Of it, more will be said later in connection with Ringan Gilhaize.

X

Successive editions have tended to obliterate the distinctive Border flavour of the dialect used in "The Brownie of Bodsbeck", but a Selkirk edition published in 1903 was brought out to rectify this tendency. Something will be said later about this gradual levelling of all Scots dialect in nineteenth century novels. The intention was to approach if not an anglicization, at least a diluted version of Scots, regarded as more understandable to a wider reading public, which might count among its readers, English people. It was this attitude towards their mother-tongue, which even in the eighteenth century, was in decline, that produced among writers and readers alike, a Scots tongue and taste that degenerated into the sentimental sloppiness of the Kailyard novel.

Hogg's Border Scots, however, when done full justice, is vigorous and vivid. It is particularly effective in a tale like the Brownie, which, though partly historical and partly legendary, is remarkable rather for delineation of Border character - shepherds, farmers and their servants.

"It will be a bluidy nicht in Gemsop this." ¹⁾ might be taken as the text of the tale, full of cruelty and mystery as it is, and such as Hogg delighted to tell, but its power to evoke terror in the reader is slight as compared with that of "The Confessions of a Justified Sinner", which is undoubtedly Hogg's

1) The Brownie of Bodsbeck, Vol. I. p. 3.

Hogg's masterpiece. His other stories are not on the scale of the two just mentioned, and though they contain pleasing sketches of pastoral life and customs, are often unequal. Whenever Hogg strays into other centuries of history, moreover, he loses his sureness of touch, commits blunders and inaccuracies, and often mars a good tale in the telling. He lacked self-restraint and self-criticism in his literary efforts and was foolishly ambitious. Scott, as usual, detected this weakness.

"Well, Hogg, you appear to me just now like a man dancing upon a rope or wire, at a great height; if he is successful and finishes his dance in safety, he has accomplished no great matter; but if he makes a slip, he gets a devil of a fall."¹⁾

Undoubtedly, Hogg did, in many of his literary undertakings; but that, in the long run does not detract from his singularity, as "a more wonderful instance of merit in a completely untaught man than even the case of the comparatively²⁾ early and well-educated and civilized Bard of Coila."

The latter quotation is taken from the works of a gentleman who followed in the path - sheeptrack one might say - of Hogg. Professor Thomas Gillespie, author of the tales - Gleanings of the Covenant - from which the remark was taken, was one of the contributors to John Mackay Wilson's Collection of Tales of the Border. The subject matter and themes of these tales - "Historical; Traditionary, and Imaginative" - fall. /

1) The Domestic Manners and Private Life of Sir Walter Scott, p. 81.

2) Wilson's Tales of the Border, Vol XIX, p. 193. The Walter Scott Publishing Co. Ltd. London.

fall under the same categories as those of Hogg. Nearly all the tales have a touch of the uncanny, often of the macabre, some verge on historical fact, others are described as authentic relations taken down from the words of the narrators. They deal with the persecuted hill-folk of the Covenant; with arch-villains in Scottish history like The Lord of Hermitage; with humble drovers, shepherds and carriers and the queer adventures that overtake them on the road; with gipsies like the Faas of the Border country. Some are moralistic on the subjects of thrift and property; others are horrific, with murders, and the haunting by a ghost or by a conscience.

However eerie these tales are, they have one trait in common with "The Brownie of Bodsbeck"; supernatural appearance is always explained: the uncanny is rationalized.

A curious locksmith of old Edinburgh prises open the lock of a deserted house to find a skeleton with rat-mutch on head, beside it, a white, ghostly figure, who proves to be his wife, who had witnessed the original tragedy.¹⁾

But there is another type of story that deals with an inward haunting, not with sheeted ghosts and all the paraphernalia of the supernatural, a story that more closely resembles Lockhart's manner, or Hogg's in "The Confessions", that shows the psychological approach to the subject. It is called "The Wager",²⁾ and deals with the ill-fate of a carrier, traversing the road from Dundee to Edinburgh. Six of his friends /

1) Wilson's Tales of the Borders - Vol XXI. The House in Bell's Wynd from The Burgher's Tales by Alex. Leighton, p. 5.

2) The Wager - by Alexander Leighton from The Surgeon's Tales, p.244 - Tales of the Border, Vol. XXI

friends have taken a wager, three against three, that through suggesting, at various stages of the road, that he is an ill-man, they will make him take to his bed at the end of the journey. The tale describes the man's reactions to the suggestion, his laughing it off, his nervous jocularities, his self-argument, excitement, horror and final fever, which conviction has brought upon him, and from which, he never recovers. The fact that his wife for the first time in her career had furnished him with some spirits for the journey, is the culminating stroke among several strange coincidences, which convince the unhappy man that he is really grievously ill. The macabre nature of this tale and the powerful way in which it is recounted, show how much, subsequent writers took a hint from the strange tales of Lockhart and of Hogg.

XI

THE NOVELS OF LOCKHART AND HOGG.CONCLUSION.

Though these strange novels of Hogg and Lockhart have been primarily considered as outcroppings of the Scottish soil, they represent the Scottish expression of the general taste for the morbid that prevailed abroad. Galt's reference (already quoted) to Adam Blair as belonging to the class of Werther and La Nouvelle Heloise is significant, for both of those books, subjective and confessional, represent a revulsion from the spirit of Voltaire, objective, and classical, to that of the new frenzied Romanticism with its insistent personal note, the romanticism of the "Sturm und Drang". Scotland in fact, through David Hume, had extended protection to Rousseau, his works were known and admired, but in the last few years of the eighteenth century, German writers made the stronger impact.

The vogue which they started was sensational; from their native forests, secretive inns, robber castles, they conjured up a host of demons, witches and ghosts. The full tide of German romanticism proper, the Romantische Schule of Tieck, Novalis, Schlegel, Brentano, etc. came too late to influence the corresponding English movement, but this earlier romantic impulse, heralded by the writers of "Von Deutscher Art und Kunst, einige fliegende Blätter" in 1773, who proclaimed, (Goethe among them) a new national literature, touched a chord of sympathy in Scotland.

Scott tells us that on the 21st April 1788, Henry Mackenzie, author of the *Man of Feeling*, read a paper before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, which directly stimulated interest in German literature in Scotland.

"Their fictitious narratives, their ballad poetry, and other branches of their literature, which are apt to bear the stamp of the extravagant and the supernatural, began also to occupy the attention of the British literati."

"In Edinburgh where the remarkable coincidence between the German language and the lowland Scottish, encouraged young men to approach this newly-discovered spring of literature, a class was formed of six or seven intimate friends, who proposed¹⁾ to make themselves acquainted with the German language."

Scott goes on to describe how his enthusiasm for and familiarity with Scots and Anglo-Saxon made him, in his haste and eagerness, commit "blunders" which were not lost on his more accurate and more studious companions.

Like Goethe, Scott was too great a genius to tie himself down to one particular school, particularly to such an over-stimulated, unhealthy school, so little representative of sane reality as was the German one, yet, as a young man, he was undoubtedly drawn to the German movement. Under its inspiration, young Edinburgh men read the works of Kant, Schiller, and Goethe, much aided by A. Frazer Tytler's translation of Schiller's *Robbers*.

Having /

1) Lockhart. *Life of Scott*, Vol. I. p. 56.

Having heard a description given of a ghastly ballad, "Lenore" by Bürger, translated by William Taylor of Norwich, Scott borrowed a volume of the German's poems, from Mrs Scott of Harden, daughter of Count Brühl of Martkärchen, formerly Saxon ambassador, who thus constituted another link with Germany.

As a result of this borrowing, there appeared anonymously in 1796 a translation of Lenore, entitled William and Helen, and one of Der Wilde Jäger - The Chase. Scott made one or two other translations, and even composed some tale of chivalry, with Border characters and supernatural happenings, in the style of their "fictitious narratives".

Thus far, he succumbed to the popular novel of the day, whose prime motive was to inspire fear and wonder by recounting grim and supernatural events. Germany was the chosen background for stories of brigandage and assassination, and Goethe's Götz von Berlichingen and Schiller's - Die Räuber had powerfully stirred the imagination of the writers of the new novels. The period from the publication of Horace Walpole's Castle of Otranto 1765 to the appearance of the Waverley Novels, was the hey day of the "Terror Novel", though the different types of Gothic romance, Historical romance, Devil romance, Ghost romance, persisted throughout the nineteenth century.

"It is thus quite possible," as Sir Herbert Grierson remarks, "that Scott might have joined the throng of terror and wonder novelists as a rival to Mrs Radcliffe and "Monk" Lewis. Indeed one can discover the features of all the group mentioned above /

above in the Waverley Novels. There are Gothic castles and ruined abbeys, historical characters, and ghosts, magicians and criminals, but in consequence of the local setting and historical perspective¹⁾ they become natural features in a quite probable story." Although the romance of the German strain must always have appealed to Scott, he probably discerned the slightly diseased imagination behind the German frenetic school. "This spirit infested not merely the department of the chivalry play and Gothic romance but prose fiction in general. It is responsible for morbid and fantastic creations like Beckford's *Vathek*, Godwin's *St. Leon* and Caleb Williams, Mrs Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Shelley's *Zastrozzi* and St. Irvine the Rosicrucian and the American Charles Brockden Brown's *Ormund* and *Wieland* - forerunners of Hawthorne and Poe."²⁾

Lockhart and Hogg are two Scotsmen who did not possess Sir Walter Scott's sense of values: it was this very morbid streak in Lockhart's novels, that caused Scott to pronounce them 'disagreeable'.³⁾ From his very young days, Lockhart had always been interested in eccentricity of character originally for fun and caricature, but latterly, because he enjoyed analysing human character. He would not have been the great biographer, had he not possessed this gift. He was also too sensitive a literary man not to be influenced by the taste of the time, and the distinctive tone of Adam Blair and Matthew Wald /

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- 1) The Scott Lectures No.II. History and the Novel, printed in University of Edinburgh Journal Vol. XI. No. 2. p. 83
 - 2) A History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century. Henry A. Beers, p. 403. London, 1926.
 - 3) The Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart, Vol.I.p.348, Andrew Lang

Wald is no doubt partly due to his reading of contemporary German and English literature. His novels, above mentioned, however are set in Scotland and woven from the conflict and bitterness he found in Scottish character. He had long believed that Scottish types had been neglected in fiction: in youth, he felt that the humours of the clergy, an aspect omitted by Smollett, would make rare comedy, but in experienced manhood, perhaps embittered by the hot and sharp wrangles of his literary career, he turned more naturally to portray the peculiar torture of a sadistic creed on sensitive or unbalanced natures.

Guided by tradition, rather than by expert literary knowledge, Hogg came to the same conclusions as Lockhart, that the religion of Scotland provided a clue to much that was dark and mysterious in the Scottish nature. In their presentation of spiritual conflicts, both reveal gruesome and unpleasant traits of character in their heroes, and throughout the novels. This effect was produced half-deliberately, half unconsciously. Both Lockhart and Hogg were aware of the literary fashion of the time, and knew that the reading public delighted in the shudder of horror, but whereas there is more often than not, wild extravagance in the Terror Novel proper, where on battlemented terraces under cold moonlight, cloaked villains concealed daggers, there is nothing so glaringly theatrical in the Scottish writers. Perhaps, just because the novels of Hogg and Lockhart are given a Scottish setting of wind-swept moors and green hills, they have a concentrated power, a blend of realism and imagination far /

far removed from the Terror Novel set on the Rhine, or among the Italian Alps. That power is based on memories of the Killing Time when a man's faith was more priceless than life: that imagination on the legend and superstition that grew up around the protagonists in the religious drama. Thus although Hogg and Lockhart chimed in with the taste of their contemporaries for stark tales, they found, ready to hand, material for these, in the past of their own lowland country.

The question arises - would Lockhart and Hogg have produced novels with such disagreeable traits in them, had the Terror Novel as a literary cult, never existed. Lockhart, as a man of letters, would be sensitive to its influence in any case, but Hogg as a natural genius, not in touch with European fashions, was impervious. Both inherited the taste for the stark and the horrible: it was in their blood, in the Scottish tradition to which they fell heir.

"The remarkable coincidence" between German and lowland Scots, lay deeper than in language. Originally the peoples were akin and it is certainly more than coincidence that both should reveal in their respective literatures, an imagination, that plays grotesquely round harsh and horrible events. Before either Hogg or Lockhart, there is Tobias Smollett, on the Scottish side, who places one of his most startling and disquieting episodes in a German setting. Although he appears on the literary scene too early to be influenced by the Terror Novel, he shows some 'terror' elements in his work, characteristic of the Scots gruesome tradition. Count Ferdinand Fathom, hero of the /

the novel of that name, crouching, with pistols cocked, in the loft of the German inn, awaits his midnight murderers, with a corpse, warm and bleeding, which he had found and undressed, lying in his place a few yards away in the straw. Outside, stretches the Gothic forest of the Terror Novel. "About midnight he heard the sound of feet ascending the latter: the door softly opened: he saw the shadow of two men stalking towards the bed, a dark lanthorn being unshrouded, directed their aim to the supposed sleeper, and he that held it thrust a poinard to his heart; the force of the blow made a compression on the chest, and a sort of groan issued from the windpipe of the defunct, the stroke was repeated without reproducing a repetition of the note, so that the assassins concluded the work was effectually done and retired for the present with a design to return and rifle the deceased at their leisure." ¹⁾

The same unpleasant shock awaits the reader in the description of the suicide's burial.

"But, it having been an invariable rule to bury such lost sinners before the rising of the sun, these five men were overtaken by day-light, as they passed the house of Berry-Knowe, and, by the time they reached the top of the Fair Law, the sun was beginning to skair the east. On this they laid down the body and digged a deep grave with all expedition; but, when they had done, it was too short, and, the body being stiff, it would not go down; on which Mr David Anderson, looking to the east /

1) Works of Tobias Smollett, Vol. 5. Ferdinand Count Fathom, p. 151.

east and perceiving that the sun would be up on them in a few minutes, set foot on the suicide's brow and tramped down his head into the grave with his iron heeled shoe, until the nose and skull crashed again, and at the same time uttered a terrible curse on the wretch who had disgraced the family and given them all this trouble." ¹⁾

In Matthew Wald also, there is a tendency to dwell on repulsive incidents, as for example, Matthew's thrashing as a boy, suspended from the branch of a tree, by a man who hates him and gloats over his humiliation, and his ordeal as surgeon's apprentice, when having his finger infected, he ruthlessly scrapes the flesh to the bone to remove the poison. All the above descriptions pertain to physical things: as physical beings ourselves, we read them with a mind of nausea and horrified fascination, - the nausea predominating.

These "terror" elements which link the Scottish writers Smollett, Hogg and Lockhart to each other and to the German school, represent but one side of the pervading fashion of the day: apart from the "gruesome" there is also the "weird". During the last dark chapters of Hogg's Memoirs, when the sinner, though still clinging to his fatal and evil beliefs, is awaiting with horror the coming of Satan, heralded by the fiends with the crimson paws, the reader is reminded of the old Faust legend. The devil is a favourite character in German literature, and it is interesting to note that a German, contemporary with Hogg, was producing his Weird Tales (1817). This was Ernst Theodor ²⁾ Wilhelm Hoffmann. In one of his stories, "The Sandman", he describes /

1) Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner. p. 280

2) From Die Nachtstücke, pub. 1817 including Der Sandmann.

describes just such a haunting of man by the devil, in the shape of an old advocate Coppelius, but there, interest is not focussed on the fiend, but on the character of young Nathaniel, the victim, and his betrothed, the beautiful Clara, who attempts to counteract the fatal gloom and derangement of mind that attacks her lover.

In his "Elixie des Teufels" also, Hoffmann explains that the theme is about "a man who even at his birth was an object of contention between the powers divine and demoniacal,"¹⁾ hence the evolution of the character of Brother Medardus, with his mystic passion and wild madness.

In the weird tales of Hogg and Hoffmann, there is the same alternation of the real with the unearthly: in the Confessions, Hogg has achieved a blend of those two elements. Though both men at their best show a rich poetic imagination, the German particularly revelled in the study of morbid characters (there was an exotic streak in the man's own personality). This preoccupation was in the German tradition and later on, the American Edgar A. Poe, who is greatly indebted to Hoffmann, betrays much the same feverish imagination in his tales. But there was nothing lurid or feverish about Hogg: he more closely resembles among American writers Nathaniel Hawthorne, as has been shown: both have written at least one story in the manner of the Pilgrim's Progress: both knew something of a Calvinist environment and this permeated their novels; neither was a pure artist like Poe, though Hawthorne was a more direct moralist than /

1) Biographical Notice prefacing Tales of Hoffmann, p. xlvii - Vol. I, ed. by J. Bealby.

than Hogg. What Mr. Herbert Read has said of Hawthorne, could be applied to Hogg at his best:- "But he is secure in his main achievements; a rare transformation of the moral sense into the objective reality of art, and the addition to that reality of the unique products of a mind magnificently haunted and hauntingly expressive."¹⁾

An example of the German influence in the sphere of the weird tale, is shown by the fact that Robert Peirce Gillies, member of the Scottish bar, and one of Hogg's own correspondents and friends was "author or translator; I know not which of German stories, the perusal of which used to make my flesh creep and my hair stand on end."²⁾ Thus wrote Hogg's own daughter Mrs Garden in the Memorials of her father.

Apart from their kinship with the contemporary German school, Hogg and Lockhart are under the shadow of a significant figure, who symbolised much of the romance, and a good deal of the evil, that lay behind the European yearning for a stimulating and exotic literature. To Lockhart, as has been mentioned, Byron was the great poet of the Romantic Revival, and he is perhaps the true link between the German type of Terror Novel and Lockhart's "Adam Blair" and Matthew Wald".

"The pale face furrowed by an ancient grief, the rare Satanic smile, the traces of obscured nobility ("a noble soul and lineage high") worthy of a better fate - Byron might be said to have derived all these characteristics by an almost slavish imitation from Mrs Radcliffe."³⁾

Yet /

2) Memorials of James Hogg, p. 205 by Mrs Garden.

3) The Romantic Agony, p.66. Mario Praz, transl. by Angus Davidson, O.U.P. 1933.

1) The Puritan as Artist - Herbert Read - The Listener Feb.1941
Vol. xxix. No. 736

Yet he perfected the type, the "Fatal Man" the rebel outcast, described by Schiller in "The Robbers", by Chateaubriand in "René", popularized in The Terror Novel as the villain - remote descendant of Milton's Satan, - and emerging finally as the hero of Romantic Literature.

Schedoni, Mrs Radcliffe's horrible monk, in her novel *The Italian, or the Confessional of the Black Penitents* (1797) is the model for Byron's Giaour, and the corsair follows suit. Schedoni has a singular appearance. His face "bore the traces of many passions, which seemed to have fixed the features they no longer animated, A habitual gloom and severity prevailed over the deep lines of his countenance; and his eyes were so piercing that they seemed to penetrate, at a single glance, into the hearts of men."¹⁾

The Giaour smiles little, but when he does 'tis sad to see

"That he but mocks at Misery.

How that pale lip will curl and quiver!"

He is a dark spirit "with death stamped on his brow:" his scowl is dark and unearthly.

"The flash of that dilating eye
Reveals too much of times gone by."

As for the Corsair:-

"There was a laughing Devil in his sneer,
That raised emotions both of rage and fear;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope withering fled, and Mercy sigh'd farewell."

In Lara too, Byron was depicting the Satanic hero and himself, as he had worked himself up to believe that he was.

"There was in him a vital scorn of all;"

Different /

1) Quotation from *Romantic Agony*, p. 59 Mario Praz.

Different aspects of the "Fatal Man" appear in Adam Blair and Matthew Wald. There is much that is Byronic in the character of Matthew Wald; he is doomed from the start, a lonely outcast figure with "seared and blasted bosom", in whose blood flow dark tides of passion and anger.

When finding analogies to Byron's "fallen angel" in Adam Blair and Matthew Wald, it comes naturally to mind, that Byron was nurtured in a peculiarly Scottish atmosphere: descended on the maternal side, from the wild Gordons, who had been at best, "noble brigands", and frightened as a child, by his Calvinist nurse's tales of hell fire and brimstone. Was it a wonder that the poet revelled in excesses, and then reacted to these with a tormentingly vivid consciousness of sin!

As Novalis said in one of his Aphorisms:-

"It is strange that the association of desire, religion and cruelty should not have attracted men's attention to the intimate relationship which exists between them, and to the tendency which they have in common."¹⁾

It is his religion which compels Adam Blair to abandon Charlotte cruelly to her fate, and to concentrate on his own private hell of remorse - the realisation that his soul is smirched. The mental agony he inflicts on himself is comparable to the flagellations of the mediaeval friars. He identifies Charlotte with his sin, and forgets her completely as a woman, particularly /

1) Psychologische Fragmente - quoted in The Romantic Agony, p. 28. Mario Praz.

particularly as the woman he loved. She has become a symbol for uncleanness.

From these analogies with contemporary literature, it will be seen that Lockhart was aware of many trends, and was by nature interested in what might be called the psychological analysis of character, whereas Hogg was dealing in his own brand of magic, inspired by the tales and legends of the Borders.

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C H A P T E R VI

JOHN GALT

- I John Galt as regional novelist; realism due to early recollection; first Scottish study refused by Constable 1813: Waverley novels (1814-20) popularised Scottish fiction: the Scottish vernacular novel of Galt compared with that of Mrs. Hamilton.
- II The Ayrshire Legatees (October 1820 - March 1821) in Blackwoods Magazine; Galt's first Scottish novel; Blackwood's encouragement; serial publication in Blackwood's Magazine, Theme - Country Scots in London; Epistolary method. Recognizable portraits. Use of West Country Scots. Comparison with Tobias Smollett. Galt's stress on national characteristics. Account of the novel; narrative line; character of Mrs. Pringle; through her, side-light on social history; the Rev. Zachariah Pringle; reaction to London life; Andrew Pringle - anglicized Scot: Rachel Pringle - romantic miss yet reveals Scots antecedents. Success of Ayrshire Legatees.
- III The Annals of the Parish 1821 - Again Scots minister - this time in rural background. Galt's account of its composition. Comparison with Vicar of Wakefield. Account of the Novel: the Malcolms and Lord Eaglesham - conventional story interest: social history: character presentation: chronicle method. Last sermon and retirement; idea of writing a book: his three wives: church matters - comparison of Dalmailing with Mauchline: Dr. Auld compared with Micah Balwhidder: the heritors: schoolmasters; schoolmistresses: "black-neb" /

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- VII Ringan Gilhaize - 1823. Disliked by Earl of Blessington. Galt's disappointment. Merits in character-drawing and language. Too many incidents for scope of one novel. Covenanting idiom. Convincing interpretation of covenanters. Convictions expressed therein, thought to be Galt's. Epic note - in incident - Reformers' March; Kirk o' Field; - in character. Tone of suffering throughout. Harmony of setting and event. Kilwinning Abbey. Rullion Green. Ringan Gilhaize cf. Henry Morton in Old Mortality. Temperament of Covenanters Party due to the killings. Premonitions of the hero, as in Sir A. Wylie and Entail. Jeffrey's criticism of Ringan Gilhaize. Portrait of Archbishop of St. Andrews. Portraits of Covenanters in second part of Ringan Gilhaize. Scott's satire and fanatics in Old Mortality. Ringan - no fanatic, Great power, but not successful, due to construction, and the taste of the time. Maginn and Lockhart on Ringan Gilhaize.

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IX John Galt's contribution to Scottish letters. Valuation in Noctes Ambrosianae. Galt's use of vernacular. Character types in which Galt specializes. The Covenanter, The Minister: The Provost. Comparison of Scott and Galt's views on improvements. Regional atmosphere of Galt's best work. Reasons why he is not a greater master: his attitude to literature: a secondary pursuit: "means of recording things done". Serious limitation of this view: did not consider himself primarily as a literary man.

I

Hitherto, in considering the work of these Scottish writers of the early 19th century, attention has been drawn to a group¹⁾ whose talents have been on, or about, the same level. Now, there enters into this study of the Petty Scots Novel an author, who is a master in his own vein, and who, in his delineation of the Scottish scene, has been considered by competent critics, as fit to rival Sir Walter Scott. This man is John Galt.

As the novelist, Miss Phyllis Bentley, in her study of "The English Regional Novel"¹⁾ stipulates, a novel can only be called regional, when its plot, character and setting are bounded by regional conditions. Sir Walter Scott's novels lie outside this terrain, for their theme is that of human nature in any stage of history and in any background that his genius suggests. But Scotland can claim in John Galt a regional writer of note, who treated a small canvass in a masterly way, and who has left for the enjoyment of posterity a few novels, in which the character of his native shire of Ayr, is indelibly etched.

Those merits, which Miss Bentley indicated as intrinsic in the regional novel at its best, might well be selected to describe Galt's own qualities as a writer.

"Its transcendent merit is that of verisimilitude.

A /

1) The English Regional Novel, P.E.N. Books, London 1941 by Phyllis Bentley.

A detailed faithfulness to reality, a conscientious presentation of phenomena as they really happen in ordinary everyday life on a clearly defined spot of real earth, a firm rejection of the vague, the high-flown and the sentimental, an equally firm contact with the real; these are the marks of the regional novel, which occupies in fiction, the place of the Dutch school of painters¹⁾ in art".

As John Galt himself summed up his aim:- "My wish²⁾ is to be estimated by the truth of whatever I try to represent".

Inspiration for his novels dealing with Scotland (which although they form only one tenth part of his sixty volumes, are the cream of his work) was drawn from localities known to him from boyhood - Irvine, Greenock, Glasgow, and rising town-ships, and neighbouring villages, like Inverkip and Dreghorn.

His fidelity to truth could be easily verified. As for his similarity in literature, to the Dutch school of painting his manner of composition, as well as his own comments thereon, bear adequate testimony to the justice of the remark.

- "some of my attempts to put things together, in accordance with the systematic harmony of Nature; have been generally recognized as not to have been failures; and I acknowledge that I have often much pleasure in forming groups of the recollections of the individual things which I have previously noticed, but I am not myself conscious of having laid /

1) The English Regional Novel - p. 45, by Phyllis Bentley.

2) The Literary Life and Miscellanies of John Galt, Edinburgh 1834, p. 237, Vol. I.

laid my recollection under any other contribution.

"I have but done as the painters do - made compositions¹⁾ by dovetailing different sketches together".

In the same Chapter (XVI) of his Literary Life, Galt vehemently asserts that he was not merely describing from memories of boyhood, and that after ten years of age, he had not seen much of that life "which it is supposed, I have most delighted to paint"²⁾.

But Galt never was the best judge of his own work, and whether he knew it or not, as Stephen Crockett writes, in his appreciation of Galt, which prefaces "The Annals of the Parish" and "The Ayrshire Legatees".

"The third and fourth decades of a man's life make the thinker; but the first two make the writer. It is from the experiences of these early years that a man makes his backgrounds, and places and develops his characterisations. -----Now on this principle, the ancient, seemly, douce, moderately God-fearing burgh of Irvine is the foster mother of most that is excellent in the writing of John Galt"³⁾.

From the bustling energy of such "a ravelled, hither and thither life"⁴⁾, romance and the wild stirring of great deeds might have been expected in the pages of John Galt's books, but the truth seems to be that he lived action and adventure /

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- 1) Literary Life and Miscellanies Vol. I., p. 146, by John Galt.
 - 2) Literary Life and Miscellanies Vol. I., p. 145, by John Galt.
 - 3) Introduction to Annals of the Parish and The Ayrshire Legatees. Edinburgh 1895, p. XXII by Stephen Crockett, edited by D. Storrar Meldrum, published - Blackwood.

adventure, stress and turmoil; the world was "too much with him, getting and spending" to be depicted in his novels; only those far-off Ayrshire days were sufficiently remote to be captured in his writing, so that "There are no books in our national literature which convey so melodious and continuous¹⁾ an impression of peace".

In his later years, at Frasers' dinner in Regent Street, it was no wonder that to Thomas Carlyle then present, Galt suggested, in his appearance - "a sedate Greenwich burgher" who "said little; but that little peaceable, clear and gutmüthig" for Galt had, deep in his nature, that untouched calm of his greatest book - "The Annals of the Parish".

And yet this wonderful picture of Ayrshire life might never have been published. Galt tells us in his Autobiography and in his Literary Life, of his first undertakings in Scottish works.

"When very young, I wished to write a book that would be for Scotland, what the Vicar of Wakefield is for England, and early began to observe, in what respects the minister of a parish differed from the general inhabitants of the country"³⁾.

Thus, like Lockhart, Galt was early attracted to depict the life of the clergy. However, for Galt, the clergymen of the town were "too urbane to furnish a model"⁴⁾ and the boy did /

1) Crockett's Introduction, p. XVII to Annals of the Parish.

2) Two Notebooks of Thomas Carlyle, ed. C.E. Norton, p. 248.

3) The Autobiography of John Galt, London-1833. Vol. II. p. 226.

4) The Autobiography Vol. II, p. 226 by John Galt.

did not pursue his plan. One Sunday, however, as he walked to the neighbouring village of Inverkip, he noticed how improvements had changed the place, and being Galt, though he approved of progress, "could not refrain from lamenting the change, as one sighs over the grave of an old man".

"While looking at the various improvements around, my intention of writing a minister's sedate adventures returned upon me suddenly, and I felt something like that glow with which Rousseau conceived his essay on the arts and sciences. I resolved to make the schoolmaster of the village the recorder¹⁾ of a register".

An example of this device was introduced into a much later novel - Eben Erskine (1833), but the original plan was put aside until the year 1813, when he discarded the schoolmaster's register for "The Annals of the Parish".

"When the work was nearly finished, I wrote to my old acquaintance Constable, the bookseller, what I was about, but he gave me no encouragement to proceed: Scottish novels, he said, would not do, for at that time, Waverley was not published, nor, if it had been, was there any resemblance²⁾ between my work and that celebrated production".

This last criticism of Galt's is a just one. Nevertheless, the success of the Waverley Novels between 1814-20, turned the tide of popular favour to the Scottish scene. Scott's is /

1) The Autobiography Vol. II. by John Galt, p. 227.

2) " " " p. 227.

is the novel of adventure of princely daring, with the Scottish vernacular introduced for atmosphere and flavouring. Having, however, appeared in the pages of a widely acclaimed author, the vernacular was once again accepted, and the path of parochial fiction, was made smooth. Scott's genius and range were too great to be confined to the chronicling of the small town; only once does he write in the vein of the Petty Scots Novel, in "The Chronicles of the Canongate", which owes much to Galt. The last good realistic novel in the vernacular, had been Mrs. Hamilton's - "Cottagers of Glenburnie" in 1808. There she had concerned herself in her didactic novel with dirty dairy-maids and farmers, and only incidentally, to temper the morality, had proved the vitality of the vernacular for vivid sketches of Scottish farming life.

Galt's province was to be rather different: in his Scottish novels, he chronicled a passing age, and faithfully represented the gradual encroachment of the Industrial Revolution on the leisurely villages and small towns of the late eighteenth century.

II

Though composed at an earlier date, "The Annals of the Parish" was not the first of Galt's Scottish novels to be published. This honour fell to "The Ayrshire Legatees", and was due to the kindly encouragement of the famous publisher, William Blackwood, to whom Galt was to owe much. On the 23rd May, 1820, Blackwood wrote to Galt -

"It /

"It is, I think, a most happy subject you have taken in hand, and you have executed it with wonderful spirited interest. The characters are quite graphic, and you have a glorious field to act upon".¹⁾

In his Autobiography, Galt pays justice to Blackwood for his initial support -

- "his reception of my first contribution to his magazine of "The Ayrshire Legatees", encouraged me to proceed with the manner in which it is composed, and thus, if there by any originality in my Scottish class of compositions, he is entitled to be considered, as the first person who discovered it".²⁾

Apparently, Galt had submitted a plan for a series of sketches to appear in Blackwood's Magazine, depicting the eccentricities of some country cousins in London. The theme had appealed to Galt's sense of humour.

"When I had leisure, it always afforded me great pleasure of a particular kind to go a-lion-showing with strangers in London, and the zest of this kind of recreation was in proportion to the eccentricity of the characters.

In the course of time I had fallen in with persons from the country, not unlike the members of the Pringle family, and had been often much amused with the naïveté of their remarks, particularly /

1) Annals of a Publishing House, Wm. Blackwood and His Sons by Mrs. Oliphant, Edinburgh, 1897. Vol. I., p. 450.

2) Autobiography Vol. II. p. 235.

particularly on common things in London unknown in remote parts of the Kingdom, and, I may add, unrequired"¹⁾.

As his sketches required a connecting link, he centred them round the adventures of a Scottish minister who, becoming the residuary legatee of his cousin a Colonel Armour, had to go up to London with his family to "obtain a speedier settlement with the agents"²⁾. In the correspondence which ensued between the Rev. Zachariah Pringle and his family in London, with members of the worthy doctor's congregation in far-off Garnock in Ayrshire there emerged a tale, which had some semblance to a novel though its creator was convinced, perhaps rightly, that it was a work that could not "be justly appreciated as a novel"³⁾.

Under the title of "The Ayrshire Legatees", the tale began to appear in Blackwood's Magazine of June 1820. Galt had entered upon his "glorious field"⁴⁾.

Earlier, on 1st May, Galt had written to warn Blackwood that his characters, though changed in name and profession were all portraits and would be recognized by Ayrshire readers. He also forbade Christopher North, one of the leading spirits in Blackwood's Magazine, to touch one of the Scotticisms.

As Miss Jenny Aberdeen rightly remarks, in her study of John Galt - "Here are two directions in which he never doubted his /

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- 1) The Literary Life, Vol. I, p. 226, and Miscellanies by John Galt.
 - 2) The Ayrshire Legatees - by John Galt, p. 72.
 - 3) Literary Life, Vol I, p. 226, and Miscellanies by John Galt.
 - 4) Annals of a Publishing House, Wm. Blackwood and His Sons, by Mrs. Oliphant, Edinburgh 1897, Vol. I. p. 450.

his skill: his power to make truthful and recognizable portraits and his command of West Country Scots. Meddling with his work on these points he would not tolerate: they were to him the important matter, and a story was a mere peg on which to display them to best advantage¹⁾".

In his contribution to the Scottish regional novel, these two gifts cannot be overestimated. Portraying the rawness of the countryman come up to town was not new. In the opening years of the eighteenth century, Sir Roger de Coverley²⁾ fresh from Worcestershire had convulsed the city, and alternately embarrassed and delighted Mr. Spectator, with his innocent outbursts. Mr. Matthew Bramble³⁾ had toured south-west England with that travelling circus - his amazing household, who had given vent, to their astonishment over new sights in letters to their familiars.

In "The Ayrshire Legatees", Galt added a new flavour to this comedy of manners, for the relish of the urbane and sophisticated, by introducing the novelty of national manners and characteristics. He had remarked, in his Autobiography, in defence of his first legitimate novel "The Earthquake", descriptive of Sicilian manners, that "the national difference in manners seems very little understood, or if understood, very /

1) John Galt by Jeannie W. Aberdeen, O.U.P. London, 1936, p. 97
 2) Joseph Addison - The Spectator Papers.

3) Tobias Smollett - Humphrey Clinker.

very little attended to".¹⁾

However, he found that there was more chance of Scottish manners and characteristics being appreciated, than those of remote European countries, so that "The Annals of the Parish" "The Ayrshire Legatees", and his other Scottish novels took precedence in popularity, over those with European or Canadian backgrounds.

Undoubtedly, "The Ayrshire Legatees" owes something to Smollett's "Humphrey Clinker"; the idea of conveying impressions of London by the various letters sent by the family, was probably derived from the earlier novel, as also the strange orthography of Mrs. Pringle, reminiscent of Winifred Jenkins's distortions, but Galt added a salty flavour of his own to the humour, when he portrayed that group in Garnock, receiving, reading and commenting, with all the pertinence of a Scotch congregation, on the doings of their minister and his family. Thus he reveals inter alia, the relationships in that small circle, as Chaucer does in his links between one Canterbury tale and another, by the spontaneous comments and reflections of the pilgrims on the stories and on their narrators.

The family of Dr. Pringle consists of himself, his good wife, Rachel his daughter, and Andrew Pringle, "my son". Those in Garnock who receive the Pringle letters are, in the same order, Mr. Mickleham Schoolmaster and Session-Clerk, (the /

1) The Autobiography Vol. II p, 234, by John Galt.

(the two posts usually went together in those days), Miss Mally Glencairn, a maiden lady, residing in the Kirkgate of Irvine, (a "street" says Galt waggishly, "that has been likened unto the kingdom of Heaven, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage"¹⁾) Miss Isabella Todd, and the Rev. Charles Snodgrass a tolerant young man appointed to officiate during the absence of the worthy doctor.

Other personalities of Garnock who assemble from time to time, on one pretext or another, to hear the Pringle letters read aloud, are the easy-going Mr. Daff, the "unco-guid" Mr. Craig the scriptural Mr. Icenor, poor Miss Nanny Eydent, the mantua-maker, that upholder of the Relief Kirk, Mrs. Glibbans, with her cross of affliction, her spiteful offspring, Miss Becky.

Gradually as the Pringles draw near to a satisfactory settlement of their affairs, the reader becomes aware of the little changes taking place among Garnock society as well - the Rev. Mr. Snodgrass hopes for the parish and his espousals to Miss Isabella Todd; Mr. Craig's terrible fall from grace in his misalliance with his servant lass.

Quite apart from the amusement derived from the character²⁾ there was for Blackwood's readers, as Miss Aberdein points out, a topical interest in "The Ayrshire Legatees", as 1820 saw the old king /

1) The Ayrshire Legatees, p. 73, by John Galt.

2) John Galt by J. Aberdein, p. 98.

king, George III's death and burial, and the new Queen's trial, events described through Pringle eyes in the novel. Thus "The Ayrshire Legatees" had a favourable conjunction of circumstances from the start to make it popular, and Dr. David Macbeth Moir¹⁾ (whose pen-name Delta was familiar in Blackwood's magazine) declares in his memoir of Galt, that Blackwood's readers even believed it to be an output of the author of Waverley.

The characterisation is entertaining. Galt delineates a rural parish minister and his people. However it is to the good wife, Mrs. Pringle that the author gives the honour of the first letter, which sets the tone of the book, and suggests as is fully borne out²⁾, that the mistress of Garnock manse is the manager, and dominant character of the tale. And a bustling letter this first one is, written to Miss Mally Glencairn, full of orders for swatches of "bombaseen and crape and muslin" for Rachel and herself, and "swatches of mourning print, with the lowest prices", for the servant lasses.

Indeed Mrs. Pringle's careful husbandry and eye for the bargain, besides being characteristic, occasion her to pry out interesting comparisons of household economy in London and Ayrshire which give "The Ayrshire Legatees" something of the value of a social history.

She is so real, this buxom, kindly and shrewd old lady, that the reader is not surprised to learn that her model was John /

1) Biographical Memoir of Galt by David Macbeth Moir - prefixed to Blackwood's Standard Novels edition of "The Annals of the Parish", p. xxiii.

2) The Ayrshire Legatees, p. 73, by John Galt.

public events, like the funeral of George III, it is to inform Miss Nanny Eydent of fashions for burials; she finds as little to be impressed by the pomp on this occasion, as for very different reasons, does Horace Walpole by royal pageantry.

Disappointing is the fact that "there will be no coronation till the queen is put out of the way"¹⁾.

The Houses of Parliament too, do not impress Mrs. Pringle.

"But, cepting the King's throne, which is all gold and velvet, with a croun on the top, and stars all round, there was nothing worth the looking at in them baith"²⁾.

As for the state of religion, again she writes, not in abstract terms, but considers how the godless state in London will affect the Pringles.

"I ashure you that there is a newspaper sold every Sabbath morning, and read by those that never look at their Bibles"³⁾.

How Scottish too is her horrified contemplation about the state of the dead.

"Ye will hardly think that they are buried in a popish - like manner, with prayers, and white gowns, and ministers, and spadefuls of yerd cast upon them, and laid in vaults like kists of oranges in a grocery seller."⁴⁾

When /

1) The Ayrshire Legatees By John Galt, p. 223.

2) " " " p. 195.

3) " " " p. 175.

4) " " " p. 174.

When that oracle of the Relief Kirk, Mrs. Glibbans, received this letter, she was observed by all her acquaintances¹⁾ to be a "laden woman".

The Rev. Zachariah Pringle is a delightful character, a compound of a good-humour, piety and simplicity. How delicious is his tale of the guile of the coachman who deliberately took them to the wrong address, and his conventional son's horror at the scene when - "Mrs. Pringle had been told that, in such disputes, the best way of getting redress was to take the number of the coach; but in trying to do so, we found it fastened on, and I thought the hackney-man would have gone by himself with laughter. Andrew (who had not observed what we were doing) when he saw us trying to take off the number, went like one demented, and paid the man, I cannot tell what, to get us out, and into the house, for fear we should have been mobbit"²⁾.

Or of the occasion when the "pocket-picker" at Windsor "cutted off the tail of my coat with my pocket book" and Mrs. Pringle claimed it from the policeman with - "It's my gudeman's"³⁾.

The good doctor too is greatly distressed at the lying-in-state of the king - "sorry am I to say, it was not a sight that could satisfy any godly mind on such an occasion"⁴⁾.

As /

1) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 176.

2) " " " p. 92.

3) " " " p. 143.

4) " " " p. 142.

As the business over the legacy was proceeding satisfactorily, Dr. Pringle gave himself up to the innocent enjoyment of donating to charity, not perceiving at first, the vanity therein.

"and I have dealt largely in the way of public charity. But I doubt that I have been governed by a spirit of ostentation, and not with that lowly-mindedness without which all alms-giving is but a serving of the altars of Beelzebub"¹⁾.

However he was pleased to notice that "prelatic abominations"²⁾ were on the decline.

"You may tell Mr. Craig, therefore, - and it will gladden his heart to hear the tidings -, that the great Babylonian madam is now, indeed, but a very little cutty"³⁾.

But Dr. Pringle, as a father of his people, never forgets his Ayrshire flock and hardly a letter comes without some gift of money to be distributed anonymously to the needy, and always with a delicacy and tact, most endearing, "you will slip in a guinea note when the dish goes round, but in such a manner that it may not be jealoused from whose hand it comes"⁴⁾.

Thus inset in "The Ayrshire Legatees" is a picture of the cares and responsibilities of the church in any small country parish.

Because /

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- 1) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 192.
 - 2) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 165.
 - 3) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 114.
 - 4) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 142.

Because Mrs. Pringle and the good Doctor are so utterly natural, they can mix with all classes of society in London, in a way denied to their fashionable son and daughter.

"The doctor and me, by ourselves, since we have been settlt, go about at our convenience, and have seen far mae farlies than baith Andrew and Rachel, with all the acquaintancé¹⁾ they have forgathert with".

Like Sir Roger de Coverley they visited the Abbey, and were shocked at the "uncircumcised Philistine" attendant - "for when I inquired, with a reverent spirit, seeing around me the tombs of great and famous men. The mighty and wise of their day, what department it was of the Abbey - 'It's the²⁾ eighteenpence department'" was the answer returned.

Most ingenuous and delightful of all perhaps, is the way in which the good man justifies his visit to the Oratorio, thus anticipating the criticism of his sharply orthodox congregation.

- "when you and the elders hear that I have been at the theatre of Drury Lane, in London, you must not think that I was there to see a carnal stage play, whether tragical or comical, or that I would so far demean myself and my cloth as to be a witness to the chambering and wantonness of ne'er-do-well playactors. No, Mr. Micklewham, what I went to see was an oratorio, a most edifying exercise of psalmody and prayer, under /

1) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 222.

2) " " " p. 229.

under the management of a pious gentleman of the name of Sir George Smart, who is, as I am informed, at the greatest pains to instruct the exhibitioners, they being for the most part before they get into his hands, poor, uncultivated creatures from Italy, France, and Germany, and other atheistical and popish countries".¹⁾

We leave Dr. and Mrs. Pringle by themselves having "a fine, quiet, canny sight of the Queen out of the window of a pastry-baxter's shop, opposite to where her Majesty stays".²⁾

"Andrew Pringle, my son", represents the anglicized Scot, one who had been called to the Bar, was rather pompous and stilted in utterance, owing to an acute consciousness that he was a Scot, speaking the English tongue. He is fond of his father and mother, but rather embarrassed at their frank avowal of their feelings, and at their countrified ways. Speaking of his father he says:- "It is impossible that I can respect his manifold excellent qualities and goodness of heart more than I do; but there is an innocency in this simplicity which while it often compels me to smile, makes me feel towards him a degree of tenderness somewhat too familiar for that filial reverence that is due from a son".³⁾

In London, however even Andrew loses his head. He has the desire, shared by many Scots, to be acquainted with celebrities.

"Our /

1) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 161.

2) " " " p. 228.

3) " " " p. 168.

"Our countrymen, in general, whatever may be their address in improving acquaintance to the promotion of their own interests, have not the best way, in the first instance, of introducing themselves. A raw Scotchman, contrasted with a sharp Londoner, is very inadroit and awkward, be his talents what they may;¹⁾"

We feel that Andrew did not include himself in that - "in general". However he gives all the benefit of his London experience to his friend the Rev. Charles Snodgrass, and describes the political characters of the day with all the condescension of a pretentious young lawyer. His letters are full of high-sounding sentiments, and philosophising, which the good folk of Garnock find very dull. Galt's implied criticism of the type finds outlet in the remarks of the Clyde skipper.

"Just as Mr. Snodgrass concluded the last sentence, one of the Clyde skippers, who had fallen asleep, gave such an extravagant snore followed by a groan, that it set the whole company a laughing, and interrupted the critical strictures which would otherwise have been made on Mr. Andrew Pringle's epistle. 'Damn it' said he: "I thought myself in a fog, and could not tell whether the land ahead was Pladda or the Lady Isle' Some of the company thought the observation not inapplicable to what they had been hearing".²⁾

Andrew's /

1) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 219.

2) " " " p. 125.

Andrew's expressed politics in "The Ayrshire Legatees" caused Galt considerable annoyance, for it was assumed that they were his own. He admits in his Literary Life, that though "impulse or temper ament, or by whatever other name it may be known made me early a Tory", "politics have never been with me of a very ardent character". "These reflections are made here, because it has been supposed that I made Andrew Pringle the representative of my own opinions; but I did not. He is by far too ultra for me, and has expressed himself with respect to many things much more acridly than I would allow myself to do, in speaking my own sentiments"¹⁾.

Andrew's strictures and comments on the celebrities of the day, Sir Francis Burdett, Hobhouse, and Wood, the Lord Mayor, may have had some interest to contemporary readers, but we are inclined to agree with the new Mrs. Craig -

"They're just a wheen auld foggies that²⁾ Mr. Andrew describes, an' no worth a single woman's pains".

Andrew's sister Rachel is the least Scottish of them all, for a genteel education has neutralized any definite character. Her letters, like those of her brother, sound artificial in contrast to those of her parents. Like her brother, she admires progress, and improvement.

"Even /

1) The Literary Life - Vol. I. pp. 227-228 by John Galt.

2) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 220.

"Even Miss Pringle, the fair, the romantic Miss Pringle, did not escape the contagion of the time. As she passed through Ardrossan in the beginning of that memorable journey, after the legacy. 'What a monument!' she exclaimed 'has the late Earl of Eglinton left there of his public spirit! It should embalm his memory in the hearts of future ages, as I doubt not but in time Ardrossan will become a grand emporium!' This then the true, material sublime. When the women speak like this, the pioneer may breathe freely. For the cause is assured¹⁾".

There are other things, which Miss Pringle tells us that she admires prodigiously. She is a bookish young miss, with literary ambitions, pretty to look at, we gather, for the young hussar captain is attracted by her, before he knows of her legacy. Yet her marriage is a good financial settlement too, for Captain Sabre is a nephew of the Argents, the agents concerned with the Pringle's legacy. Galt might have introduced a love interest to the Ayrshire Legatees, centred round Rachel; but he was ever anti-romantic, and there is not one complication to upset this marriage by arrangement.

However Rachel is very much her brother's sister; indeed she admires Andrew greatly.

Captain Sabre indeed, "although he is certainly a very handsome young man, he is not such a genius as my brother and /

1) Introduction to Annals of the Parish by John Galt, by G.S. Gordon, London 1908.

and has no literary partialities"¹⁾. She is a would-be blue-stocking and a soulful young woman, who admires mind above all, but as we read her lofty utterances, we are almost tempted to agree with spiteful Miss Becky Glibbans in Garnock.

"Rachel had aye a gude roose of hersel"²⁾.

The Pringles' fortune acquired, we read, with pleasure of the blithe homecoming to Garnock and glad reunion of Mr. and Mrs. Pringle with their parishioners. Their homecoming is beautifully described, and the unaffected joy of their congregation. Among the crowd awaiting the Pringles, Galt has detected the "thin yellow faces"³⁾ of the "wabster lads". He had a tender eye for the afflicted and hard-worked artisans. His singling them out is not without significance - progress in industry takes its toll in human health.

However, at half past four on that autumn afternoon, a carriage reached the turnpike; "and deep beyond a pile of light bundles and band-boxes that occupied a large portion of the interior, the blithe faces of the doctor and Mrs. Pringle were discovered. The boys huzzaed, the doctor flung them penny-pieces, and the mistress baubees.

As the carriage drove along, the old men on the dyke stood up and reverently took off their hats and bonnets. The weaver /

1) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 151.

2) " " " p. 237.

3) " " " p. 265.

weaver lads gazed with a melancholy smile; the lassies on the carts clapped their hands with joy; the women on both sides of the street acknowledged the recognizing nods.¹⁾

The Pringles had come home again.

There was no question about the success of "The Ayrshire Legatees" and Galt "unknown in London as the author" - "frequently in consequence heard it spoken of in terms that were agreeable".²⁾ As it had appeared at different times in Blackwood's Magazine, the publisher "paid for it at the common price of any other contributions; nor, although it is now very generally known, do I think at the time he could have afforded to give my any thing for the work when it was separately published".³⁾

III

As "The Ayrshire Legatees" had represented a country preacher in London, "The Annals of the Parish" showed one in his own rural environment. It must be said at once, however, that the handling of the character of the Rev. Micah Balwhidder is infinitely more careful and delicate, than that of the Rev. Zachariah Pringle.

The impression which the reader has of the latter is, all the way through, as Galt at the end describes him:- "he was /

1) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 266.

2) The Literary Life (Vol I, p. 225) and Miscellanies by John Galt.

3) The Literary Life (Vol. I, p. 225) and Miscellanies by John Galt.

was of that easy sort of feather-bed corpulency of form that
 1) betokens good nature", but the portrait of the Rev. Micah
 Balwhidder conjures up a slight pale man, whose character is
 of other worldliness, shot through with streaks of perspicacity,
 which are at once amusing and true to type.

As "The Ayrshire Legatees" showed a Scots group
 adjusting itself to the novelties of London life, "The Annals
 of the Parish" shows a rural community adapting itself to the
 progress of the age. The eighteenth century had been apt to
 associate progress with mechanical improvements; the Oxford
 Book of Eighteenth Century Verse shows how poetry was called
 to celebrate the deepening of rivers, draining of fens, cutting
 of canals

"Soon shall thy arm, unconquered steam, afar
 Drag the slow barge, or drive the rapid Car"

The Economy of Vegetation.
 Erasmus Darwin. i, (1792)

Not only the didactic poems of Dyer, Granger and
 Darwin, but the eighteenth century guide books drew attention
 2) to material improvement. Progress dazzled the imagination.
 In "The Annals of the Parish", Galt with his finger, as usual,
 on the pulse of the time, blends this account of improvements
 with another contribution peculiarly Scots, - the local humours
 of the countryside, and the flavour of its idiom. It was a
 good /

1) The Ayrshire Legatees by John Galt, p. 276.

2) Edinburgh Essay on Scots Literature. John Galt by Dr.
 G. Kitchin, p. 109.

good project - a paying idea. Galt himself has a word to say on this subject.

"The Annals of the Parish" and 'The Provost' have been generally received as novels, and I think, in consequence they have both suffered, for neither of them have, unquestionably a plot. My own notion was to exhibit a kind of local theoretical history, by examples, the truth of which would at once be acknowledged. But as novels they are regarded, and I must myself as such now consider them; but still some thing is due to the author's intention, for, notwithstanding the alleged liveliness of some of the sketches, as stories they are grealy deficient."¹⁾

The reading public regarded it as a novel, Galt himself thought it "a theoretical history", while the veteran Henry MacKenzie himself steeped in the eighteenth century tradition, found in it a didactic aim, and advocated a perusal of it, "to members of communities in situations similar to that of the Parish of which this excellent clergyman had the charge"; therein they would see "what novelties to adopt as useful, or discourage as pernicious."²⁾

As Galt maintained, a local "theoretical history" does not require a story. The only connected story interest is supplied by the Malcolm family in 'The Annals of the Parish', much as Sir Roger de Coverley's relations with the "perverse widow" /

1) The Literary Life (Vol. I, p.226) and Miscellanies by John Galt.

2) Vol IX. Blackwood's Magazine, May 1821, p.210. Article in the "Annals of the Parish" by Henry Mackenzie.

widow" provide the fiction part of the Spectator essays.¹⁾ As such, the perennial piety of the widow and the inevitable rise to fortune of her family, are unconvincing in the realistic context of village life, although the departure of Charles to sea, and the account of his death on active service are compelling, in a certain pathos.

Another conventional note is brought in with the Rev. Micah's patron, the generous-hearted, but dissolute Lord Eaglesham, - a variation on the theme of the wicked lord.

Apart from these two stereotyped groups, there is nothing artificial in the Annals: it breathes of the soil of Ayrshire. For the interest of the social history, and for the amazing subtlety of Galt's handling of the character of the minister, the Annals of the Parish takes its place as a classic in Scottish literature. Herein Galt showed that he possessed integrity as an author. As has been said, he regarded the Rev. Micah Balwhidder as the Scottish Vicar of Wakefield, but in that agreeable novel, Oliver Goldsmith took many liberties with his amiable pastor. To go back farther,²⁾ Parson Adams is one of the first great presentations of the clergy in the novel, and yet, his author, Henry Fielding, catering for the rough and tumble of the age, offers his parson as part of the rollicking fare. Galt was faithful to a consistent interpretation. There is a quaint dignity about the Rev. Micah Balwhidder that is untouchable. But for all that (and herein lies /

1) Edinburgh Essays on Scots Literature John Galt by Dr. G. Kitchin, p. 111.

2) Joseph Andrews - Henry Fielding.

lies Galt's sly but discreet humour) the Rev. Micah is in the same glorious company as the Vicar, the Parson and Sir Roger de Coverley, as well as Don Quixote and Mr. Pickwick,¹⁾ for his innocent self-importance and simplicity.

A part from his treatment of social history and development of the minister's character, Galt's method in "The Annals of the Parish" is noteworthy; he makes the Rev. Micah Balwhidder chronicle the "memorables" of each year of his charge in Dalmailing. Thus the Annals begin in 1760, in the year of the accession of George III, and close with the monarch's reign. The coincidence of dates and time is related in the opening of the book, with an innocent pleasure and gratification.

"In the same year, and on the same day of the same month, that his Sacred Majesty King George, the third of the name, came to his crown and kingdom, I was placed and settled as the minister of Dalmailing. When about a week thereafter this was known in the parish, it was thought a wonderful thing, and every body spoke of me and the new king as united in our trusts and temporalities, marvelling how the same should come to pass, and thinking the hand of Providence was in it, and that surely we were preordained to fade and flourish in fellowship together; which has really been the case; for in the same season that his Most Excellent Majesty (as he was very properly styled in the proclamation for the general fasts and thanksgivings /

1) Edinburgh Essays on Scots Literature, John Galt, p. 112, by Dr. G. Kitchin.

thanksgivings) was set by as a precious vessel which had received a crack or a flaw, and could only be serviceable in the way of an ornament, I was obliged, by reason of age and the growing infirmities of my recollection, to consent to the earnest entreaties¹⁾ of the Session, and to accept of Mr. Amos to be my helper."

The good man's last sermon which he then proceeds to recount is simple and affecting and very much in character, regretting that he had not used his talents to the full, considering his education at the Orthodox University of Glasgow, exhorting his young friends to follow the piety of their fathers, bidding his old friends adieu.

Though he denounces with proper spirit, "popish and prelatic usurpation", he has a caution²⁾ for the young ones not to listen to the "hypothetical politics"²⁾ of the day, nor to gird their loins for battle until they feel the presence of the oppressor in their own homes and dwellings.

Thus though the stirring events of the years 1760-1810 come but faintly as echoes, or not at all into the peaceful backwater of these Annals, the spirit of the age with its restlessness and exploration of new social relations, had so penetrated the atmosphere of Dalmailing that its minister (as did most of the established clergy then) felt compelled to advise the maintenance of the existing laws and Government against /

1) Annals of the Parish - John Galt. John Grant - Edinburgh 1936, p.1.

2) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 4.

against any dangerous, new liberal ideas, that might be inspired by the doctrines of the French Revolution.

But the cadence of his last sermon, almost elegiac in tone, its expression so perfectly suited to its ideas, caused a great solemnity "throughout the kirk; and before giving the blessing I sat down to compose myself, for my heart was big and my spirit oppressed with sadness.

As I left the pulpit, all the elders stood on the steps to hand me down, and the tear was in every eye, and they helped me into the session-house; but I could not speak to them, nor they to me. Then Mr. Dalziel, who was always a composed and sedate man, said a few words of prayer, and I was comforted therewith, and rose to go home to the manse; but in the churchyard all the congregation was assembled, young and old, and they made a lane for me to the back - yett that opened into the manse-garden. Some of them put out their hands and touched me as I passed, followed by the elders, and some of them wept. It was as if I was passing away, and to be no more. Verily, it was the reward of my ministry, a faithful account of which, year by year, I now sit down, in the evening of my days to make up, to the end that I may bear witness to the work of a beneficent Providence, even in the narrow sphere of my parish, and the concerns of that flock of which it was His most gracious pleasure to make me the unworthy shepherd".¹⁾

With /

1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 6.

With these words, gracious, wise and benevolent, the Rev. Mr. Micah Balwhidder sets out to record the doings of his little parish during fifty-one momentous years.

It is an old man who is writing, and the gentleness and tolerance of old age pervade the pages. Perhaps too, his years account for his curious sense of perspective, that Galt has so wonderfully caught. The tense is in the past, the writer is at a sufficient distance to see the significance and the pattern of village life in retrospect. Perhaps Galt's own close contact with the Irvine carlins in his boyhood gave him this understanding of the outlook of old age, which can either blindly ignore the great events in a nation's life, or focus its "near-sighted"¹⁾ gaze with amazing penetration, sensing the impact those great events produce in the lives immediately surrounding them. Thus it happens in Galt's Annals that the American Wars and the Napoleonic conflict are only brought home to the villagers of Dalmailing by the deaths of volunteer soldiers and sailors from the parish and by the disaffection of the weavers inspired by the ideas of the French Revolution.

Yet how skilfully are the gradual changes in social life indicated in the Annals. Galt may have set out to write the book, with the idea of capturing in its pages with all the sober verity of a historian, Scottish village life of a passing age, but without sacrificing the truth of his picture, he has blended /

1) John Galt by Jennie W. Aberdein. p.103.

blended fact and creation,. There is no impression of a catalogue of events; incidents are recounted, anecdotes retold, as it were, from the lips of those present.

Thus the character of the narrator, the Rev. Micah Balwhidder is gradually revealed, as well as the nature of progress among his people. It is this blend of imagination and history that gives the Annals their unique quality. And it says everything for Galt's characterisation, that, to the reader, the Rev. Micah Balwhidder is as real as the events which he relates.

Inimitable is the way in which the worthy minister recalls how the great idea of writing a book came to him.

"On one of these occasions, as I was sauntering along the edge of Eaglesham-wood looking at the industrious bee going from flower to flower, and at the idle butterfly that layeth up no store but perisheth ere it is winter, I felt as it were a spirit from on high descending upon me, a throb at my heart, and a thrill in my brain; and I was transforted out of myself, and seized with the notion of writing a book.

But what it should be about, I could not settle to my satisfaction." 1)

Whether it should be "an orthodox poem, like Paradise Lost by John Milton, wherein I proposed to treat more at large of Original Sin, and of the great mystery of Redemption, "or a connect treatise on the efficacy of Free Grace", the good doctor was not sure and so, the whole summer passed and in the winter of /

1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 40.

of that year (1764) his mind was not on a book, but on marrying his second wife.

The whole business of the minister and his three wives makes good reading; the three transactions, for such they were, were all governed by common sense. His first wife, Miss Betty Lanshaw was Mr. Balwhidder's cousin, and the marriage was arranged "more out of a compassionate habitual affection¹⁾ than the passion of love". Yet, when she died, this lady inspired the minister's muse, so that he composed "in sedate poetry" an epitaph for her headstone, which begins:-

"A lovely Christian, spouse, and friend,
Pleasant in life, and at her end -
A pale consumption dealt the blow
That laid her here, with dust below.
Sore was the cough that shook her frame;
That cough her patience did proclaim -
And as she drew her latest breath,²⁾
She said, 'The Lord is sweet in death'."

And thus it runs on for many more lines. Mr. Balwhidder felt the propriety of writing it in English, "as Mrs. Balwhidder, worthy woman as she was, did not understand the Latin tongue"³⁾.

As Stephen Crockett says:-

"Now, to one who knows the South of Scotland, and is familiar with the rhyming tombstones to be found in almost all its kirkyairds, it is hard to believe that these lines are not wholly taken from genuine 'throughs' and not only, as the author himself confesses, the first four lines"⁴⁾.

The /

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- 1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 14.
 2) " " " p. 38.
 3) " " " p. 37.
 4) Introduction to "Annals of the Parish" 1936 edition -
 (Grant - Edinburgh.)

The second Mrs. Balwhidder was of a very different cut of cloth. She was the means of "giving a life and energy to the housewifery of the parish that has made many a one beek his shins in comfort that would otherwise have had but a cold coal to blow at".¹⁾

Yet the minister was not satisfied in his own mind that he "had got the manse merely to be a factory of butter and cheese, and to breed up veal calves for the slaughter",²⁾ and when, later on, the son of this marriage, Gilbert, was a merchant in Glasgow, and the daughter, Janet, at a boarding school in Ayr, and Mrs. Balwhidder "busy with the lasses and their ceaseless wheels and cardings in the kitchen", the Rev. Micah Balwhidder was "a most solitary married man".³⁾

In the year 1796, the second Mrs. Balwhidder, having been "very ill for some time with an income in her side", was gathered to the Lord and was laid beside the first wife with her name inscribed upon the same headstone, but the minister reflects sadly that "time had drained my poetical vein, and I have not yet been able to indite an epitaph on her merits and virtues".⁴⁾

But if she "subtracted something from the quietude that was most consonant to my nature, she has left cause, both in bank and bond, for me and her bairns to bless her great household activity".⁵⁾

The /

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| 1) | The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 49. |
| 2) | " " " p. 48 |
| 3) | " " " p. 196 |
| 4) | " " " p. 216 |
| 5) | " " " p. 217 |

The minister's motive for entering the state of matrimony for a third time, is stated quite honestly:-

"It behoved me, therefore, to look in time for a helpmate¹⁾ to tend me in my approaching infirmities."

Out of the town of Irville - an abundant "trone for widows and single women", he "fixed" his "purpose on Mrs. Mugent, the relict of a professor in the university of Glasgow."²⁾

Galt's anti-romantic attitude was not then unique. The treatment of marriage in the fiction of his time (save in the chivalric Waverley novels) is rarely as a sequel to romantic love; that was to come later in the nineteenth century, with such writers as the Brontës. Marriage was still a practical business - like, eighteenth century arrangement - at least in books - connected as in the satire of Jane Austen and Susan Ferrier with indefatigable match-making, in Galt's mind inseparably bound up with "tochers" and "entails".

Apart from his wives the set of persons continuously associated with the minister are naturally those connected with the church. In and out of the picture, flit the elders and heritors, with the problems of church government associated with them. We get a vivid impression of the pre-judices and vexations to be overcome by ministers of this period, (and among these the battle over patronage, is one of the most serious) in the pages of Dr. Edgar's "Old Church Life in Scotland".³⁾ This writer draws many of his illustrations from the Session Records of Mauchline in Ayrshire, particularly during /

1) The Annals of the Parish, by John Galt. p. 218

2) " " " p. 218

3) Old Church Life in Scotland: Lectures in Kirk-Session and Presbytery Records by Dr. Edgar.

during the ministry of Burns's "Daddy Auld". It is just possible that Galt may have had some such person as Wm. Auld in his mind, when creating the character of the Rev. Micah Balwhidder. Although Micah does not rule with "apostolic rigour in his own house", he has some characteristics in common with Mr. Auld, for example, his attitude towards sinners. "And, while no man was sterner in reproving sin wherever it was proved, few men ever forgave more fully after sin was confessed and censured, or were more resolute in upholding charitable judgment where guilt was not made evident"¹⁾.

Their sermons too "were thoroughly practical discourses. They neither soared into regions of airy sublimity, nor went down beneath the foundation of things"²⁾.

Moreover both were great parish reformers. Above all, however, Mr. Auld resembles Mr. Balwhidder in his literary effort for he compiled a Statistical Account of his parish, when he was an old man. Their respective periods of ministry overlap, for Mr. Auld's extended from 1742-1790. Of the Statistical Account, Dr. Edgar remarks:-

"It is not remarkable for any recondite learning, but it is written in a vivacious and vigorous style, very wonderful for a man nearly four score years old"³⁾.

To return to the case of Mr. Balwhidder however, his very /

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- 1) Old Church Life in Scotland by Dr. Edgar, Vol. II, p. 381.
 2) " " " " p. 379
 3) " " " " p. 385.

very placing aroused a storm of disapproval, because he had a patron.

"We were therefore obligated to go in by a window, and the crowd followed us in the most unreverent manner, making the Lord's house like an inn on a fair day with their grievous yelly hooing"¹⁾.

As Dr. Edgar notes - "The popular dislike of patronage was at this date so vehement that the most unrighteous means were used by people, professing zeal for the glory of God, to prevent the presentees of patrons obtaining settlement in the parishes to which they were appointed."²⁾

Mention is then made of a minister called Millar, who was so treated on his presentation by the Earl of Eglinton to the parish of Kilmaurs in 1787. This has some bearing on the novel for the Earl of Eglinton shared the same fate as the Earl of Eaglesham in Galt's Annals - he was shot by an excise officer, so that it is possible that some anecdotes concerning these Ayrshire personalities were in Galt's mind, when he was composing his novel.

When at last the Rev. Micah Balwhidder was accepted by his people, he still had to stand out firmly against the injustices of the heritors. These gentlemen were often stumbling blocks to real progress; they were bound to provide for the poor and for education, to keep the kirk in good repair and the manse. On all those duties, Micah had argument and discord with the heritors. Their sordid behaviour was most noticeable in connection with the schoolmaster and the school-house. /

1) The Annals of the Parish by J. Galt, p. 8.

2) Old Church Life in Scotland - p. 389, V.II. (Note) Dr. Edgar.

school-house.

"It was in this year (1761) that Patrick Dilworth (he had been schoolmaster of the parish from the time, as his wife said of Anna Regina and before the Rexes came to the crown) was disabled by a paralytic, and the heritors, grudging the cost of another schoolmaster as long as he lived, would not allow the Session to get his place supplied"¹⁾.

However in 1763 the old man died, and the heritors had to appoint a Mr. Lorimore, who became schoolmaster, session-clerk and precentor. The suggestion throughout this episode is that although the kirk was zealous for education the heritors often were not interested. The heritors too were bound to pay the master a fixed salary to be augmented by the pupils' offerings, but this they were loath to do, so that, as Dr. Edgar says, -

"Presbyterical injunctions were year after year given to the ministers of these parishes to take effective measures²⁾ for compelling the heritors to provide such salaries", and he cites as an instance, that the salary of the Mauchline schoolmaster did not rise above £120 Scots i.e. £10 sterling, until the beginning of the 19th century.

Through the minister's account, John Galt gives us a glimpse of female education of the time.

There /

1) Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 18.

2) Old Church Life (Vol. II. p. 92) in Scotland by Dr. Edgar.

There was one Nanse Banks, (reminiscent in her good works, of Mrs. Mason)¹⁾ who in a garret room had taught the girls "reading and working stockings; and how to sew the semplar, for twal pennies a week".

With an eye to the painful realism of it, and a touch like that of Wilkie the painter, Galt describes "the patient creature, well cut out for her calling, with blear een, a pale face and a long neck, but meek and contented withal, tholing the dule of this world with a Christian submission of the spirit".²⁾

Her successor, Miss Sabrina Hookey, who had "heard of the vacancy in our parish: as it were, just by the cry of a passing bird;"³⁾ represents a further stage of development in female education. Sabrina, as she was called, for her father had "maintained a sort of intromission with the nine muses", introduced new styles in mantua-making, and later taught the girls tambouring. She was regarded as more uppish than the late Nanse Banks, but as the minister pitifully remarked:-

"Hers, however, was but a harmless vanity; and, poor woman, she needed all manner of graces to set her out, for she was made up of odds and ends, and had but one good eye, the other being blind, and just like a blue bead".⁴⁾

Apart from the question of education however, Mr. Balwhidder /

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- 1) The Cottagers of Glenburnie, by Eliz. Hamilton.
 - 2) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 19.
 - 3) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 70.
 - 4) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 70.

Balwhidder had trouble with the heritors. In 1791, after a visit to Glasgow, to instal his son Gilbert in a counting house, Mr. Balwhidder returns to his rural parish, meditating on the vexed question of improvements. Glasgow had increased since his youth, almost beyond recognition, but he (as well as his author) was not blind to the "greater proportion of long white faces in the Trongate" among the weavers and cotton-mill workers."

Accordingly, good foolish man he preached a series of sermons on "the evil and vanity of riches"¹⁾, but as the year was 1791, and the ruling classes nervy, because of the pervading French doctrines, Micah was giving cause to many to think him "an enemy to the king and government and a perverter of Christianity to suit levelling doctrines"²⁾.

Many of the heritors therefore called him a "black-neb" but he weathered the storm, and returned to their good graces in the year 1793, when he preached against the regicides of France, "one of the greatest and soundest sermons I had ever delivered in my pulpit"³⁾.

In the next year too, (1794) he denounced the "Utilitarians" a word to be borrowed from The Annals of the Parish, by John Stuart Mill.

Other /

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- 1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 194.
 2) " " " p. 195.
 3) " " " p. 203.

Other offices of the heritors, mentioned in the Annals are augmenting of the minister's stipends, by paying him the "teinds", and the burial of the poor and the doited like Janet Guffaw, whose death is affectingly described as the chief event of the year 1782.

Apart from the church customs enshrined in the Annals, changes in the character of the population, and in their social habits, as well as parish improvements are recorded. Henry MacKenzie in his article on the Annals of the Parish in Blackwood's Magazine, gives a list of the practices arising out of the new ways, which the minister reprobates with becoming severity - "smuggling, the immoderate use of spiritous liquors, the neglect of sacred duties, the establishment of idle or unprofitable places of resort, the rash and ignorant discussion of politics, the irreverent contempt of legal and wholesome authority"¹⁾.

Although smuggling had a grim side with cadgers and excisemen, riding by day and night, drunkenness and debauchery, and the Session "that was but on the lip of the whirlpool of iniquity"²⁾ much exercised over it all, yet the whole question of tea, and the references to it, form some of the most delightful anecdotes in the Annals.

"Well do I remember that, one night in harvest, in this very year (1761) as I was taking my twilight dauner aneath the hedge along the backside of Thomas Thorl's yard, meditating on /

1) Vol. IX, Blackwood's Magazine May 1821 - p. 209, by Henry MacKenzie.

2) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 15.^k

on the goodness of Providence, and looking at the sheaves of victual in the field, I heard his wife and two or three other carlines with their Bohea in the inside of the hedge; and no doubt but it had a lacing of the cognac for they were all crack-
:ing like pen-guns. But I have them a sign by a loud host, that Providence sees all, and it skailed the bike; for I heard them like guilty creatures, whispering and gathering up their truck-pots and trenchers, and cowering away home"¹⁾.

Progress in various material aspects raised the standard of living through the passing of the years in the Parish of Dalmailing. The year 1765 saw three "new coal-²⁾ heughs" shanked in the Douray moor, which provided more money and a reliable source of fuel; the establishment of a whisky distillery; experiments in dairy-farming by the minister's father-in-law, Mr. Kibbock, "whose cheese were of such an excellent quality, that they have, under the name of Delap-³⁾ cheese, spread far and wide over the civilized world".

This gentleman "planted fir-trees on the bleak and barren tops of the hills of his farm - the which everybody (and I among the rest) considered as a thrashing of water and raising of bells. But as his tack ran, his trees grew, and the plantations supplied him with stabs to make stake and rice between his fields, which soon gave them a trig and orderly appearance /

1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 18.

2) " " " p. 45.

3) " " " p. 46.

appearance, such as had never before been seen in the west
country;¹⁾"

A new tacksman, Mr. Coulter, came to the parish in 1766. "from far beyond Edinburgh, and had got his insight among the Lothian farmers, so that he knew what crop should follow another; and nothing could surpass the regularity of his rigs and furrows"²⁾.

Those two references to farming, recall to the reader, the period of experimentation in Scottish agriculture (referred to in Chapter I) which first bore fruit in the rich farmlands of Ayrshire and the Lothians.

In the year 1788 a cotton-mill was built, which changed the aspect of Dalmailing's environment, for to house the workers, a new town Cayenville was built in the vicinity. This brought much prosperity to the parish, "and the whole countryside was stirring with a new life".

The only people who were not pleased were the "ancient families, in their turreted houses" when they saw the handsome dwellings that were built for the weavers of the mills, and the unstinted hand that supplied the wealth required for the carrying on of the business".

The jealousy of the small lairds, and their gradual extinction, was a subject that interested Galt: apart from references to it, as here, he treated the question most fully in his novel - "The Last of the Lairds"³⁾.

But /

1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 49

2) " " " p. 54

3) " " " p. 182.

But the cotton mill also suffered from the vicissitudes of fortune and the French war, so that in 1808 the company failed; this caused great distress in the parish, and the Minister relates the affecting suicide of Mr. Dwining one of the overseers.

Another innovation brought in by the politically minded weavers of Cayenneville, was a bookseller's shop, which catered for their republican zeal. However, the bookseller himself proved a whawp in our nest; for he was in league with some of the English reformers and when the story took wind three years after, concerning plots and treasons of the corresponding societies and democrats, he was fain to make a moonlight flitting¹⁾".

This reference recalls the Sympathy aroused in Scotland over the French Revolution and the correspondence that existed between the two countries at the time, all of which is treated most fully in Dr. Meikle's study - "Scotland and the French Revolution"²⁾. "Like the American War this crisis created a keen desire for news. The press published full accounts taken chiefly from the London Gazette. Scottish newspaper enterprise was limited, and the public curiosity was to be gauged by an increased importation of English journals, well known in the larger towns where they could be obtained at the bookseller's or consulted in the coffee-houses and tap-rooms"³⁾.

The /

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- 1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 90.
 - 2) Scotland and the French Revolution - Henry W. Meikle, Glasgow, 1912.
 - 3) Scotland and the French Revolution by Dr. Meikle, p. 43.

The hubub and excitement of the times, which found its echo even in Cayenneville, is well described by one of France's agents, a Citoyen Pétry, "agent de la marine et du commerce" in Scotland. "Pétry described the enthusiasm for the Revolution evinced by the people in the west of Scotland, the subscription raised in Glasgow on behalf of the National Assembly, the rise of the Friends of the People, and of the counter constitutional associations¹⁾".

However, as the parish had withstood the American War, with the loss of a few recruits and had only heard echoes of the Gordon Riots, now it was tided over the doubtful years of the French Revolution, so that under the threat of a French invasion, even the artisins¹⁾ became patriotic, rushed to join the volunteer force and elected gentlemen of the parish to be their officers.

Apart from Galt's veracity as a social historian in the Annals of the Parish there is also his skill at characterisation. Of the many thumb-nail sketches in the novel, three stand out most vividly. Each one is connected with events taking place at the time; there is Mr. Macskipnish the dancing master, regarded by the minister as an invader of the parish through the smuggling trade; Lady Macadam, the fine, the grand dame of the village, and Mr. Cayenne the Nabob.

Thus /

1) Scotland and the French Revolution by Dr. Meikle.
p. 164.

Thus Micah records the coming of the dancing master. "One Mr. Macskipnish (of Highland parentage who had been a valet-de-chambre with a major in the campaigns and taken a prisoner with him by the French) having come home in a cartel, took up a dancing school at Irville the which art he had learnt in the genteelest fashion, in the mode of Paris, at the French Court"¹⁾.

There follows a wickedly clever caricature - "The very bairns on the ban, instead of their wonted play, gaed linking and louping in the steps of Mr. Macskipnish, who was, to be sure, a great curiosity, with long spindle legs, his breast shot out like a duck's (and his head powdered and frizzled up like a tappit hen"¹⁾.

Cruickshank would do justice to the figure in his illustrations. Indeed Galt was never very flattering to the Highlander.

Lady Macadam represents the capricious, high-born lady, who had been in the old days at the French court. Micah disapproved of her "lightness and juvenility of behaviour altogether unbecoming her years".

"She was, to be sure, crippled with the rheumatics, and no doubt the time hung heavy on her hands; but the best friends of recreation and sport must allow that an old woman sitting whole hours jingling with that paralytic chattel a spinnet was not a natural object! What, then, could be said for /

1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 21.

for her singing Italian songs, and getting all the newest from Vauxhall in London - a boxful at a time - with new novel-books and trinkum-trankum flowers and feathers, sent to her by a lady of the blood royal of Paris?"¹⁾

Though full of whims, Lady Macadam was kind to the poor.

Another thorn in the flesh, was Mr. Cayenne, the Nabob who had made his fortune in the plantations, and had returned with his family, dusky servant Sambo, his apoplectic temper and the gout, to spend his remaining years in Dalmailing.

As the cotton mill was built on his ground, he made much out of the transaction; on the other hand, in time of dearth, it was he who saved the parish from starvation by distributing grain which he had bought and stored. Such an active, enterprising man was of course an anomaly in Dalmailing and a perfect plague to the minister and his colleagues. However, he had an affection for Micah, although he probably rated his ability as moderate, and it was the minister whom he summoned, when he was dying. The last scene between them is startling enough. Asked how he felt, the old reprobate answered:-

"Damned bad", said he, as if I had been the cause of his sufferings. I was daunted to the very heart to hear him in such an unregenerate state; but after a short pause I addressed myself /

1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 84.

myself to him again, saying that "I hoped he would soon be more at ease; and he should bear in mind that the Lord chasteneth whom he loveth".

"The devil take such love!" was his awful answer,
which was to me as a blow on the forehead with a m¹⁾ell".

However, after more talk in this tenor, the Rev. Micah Balwhidder earnestly prays for his old friend.

"Thou hearest, O Lórd, how he confesses his unworthiness. Let not thy compassion, therefore, be withheld; but verify to him the words that I have spoken, in faith, of the boundlessness of thy goodness, and the infinite multitude of thy tender mercies".

I then calmly, but sadly, sat down, and, presently, as if my prayer had been heard, relief was granted; for Mr. Cayenne raised his head, and giving me a queer look, said, "That last clause of your petition, doctor, was well put, and, I think, too, it has been granted, for I am easier". And he added "I have no doubt, doctor, given much offence in the world, and oftenest when I meant to do good; but I have wilfully injured no man; and as God is my judge, and his goodness, you say, is so great, he may, perhaps take my soul into his holy keeping." In saying which words, Mr. Cayenne dropped his head upon his breast; his breathing ceased; and he was wafted away out of this world with as little trouble as a blameless baby²⁾".

Apart /

1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 48, Vol. II.

2) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, p. 50. " " X

Apart from the setting up of a sectarian meeting-house in Cayenneville among the weavers, old Mr. Balwhidder had little to trouble him towards the end of his ministry. In the summer of 1809, the elders came to him in a body, and after praising his godly ministry, offered to get him a helper. The old man's answer is very human:-

"But I would not at that time listen to such a proposal, for I felt no falling off in my powers of preaching: on the contrary, I found myself growing better at it, as I was enabled to hold forth, in an easy manner, often a whole half-hour longer¹⁾ than I could do a dozen years before".

However by the spring of 1810, he concedes to the proposal, and in that very year consents to retire, though still continuing to marry and baptize. Even his anger against the schismatics has gone, and on his last appearance at church they all attend, and stand in the crowd "that made a lane of reverence for me to pass from the kirk-door to the back-yett²⁾ of the manse".

Mr. Balwhidder goes into his retirement knowing that "the time will come to pass when the tiger of Papistry shall lie down with the lamb of Reformation, and the vultures of Prelacy be as harmless as the Presbyterian doves, when the Independent, the Anabaptist, and every other order and denomination of Christians, not forgetting even those poor wee wrens of the Lord, the Burghers and Antiburghers, will pick from the hand of patronage /

1) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, V. II, p. 64.

2) " " " " p. 67.

patronage, and dread no snare".

Galt is faithful to his original purpose, and retains the tone and language of "miraculous unction"¹⁾ to the end, so that we leave Mr. Balwhidder; that meek Christian, counting his blessings, and hoping to meet in Heaven, "all the old and long-departed sheep of my flock, especially the first and second Mrs. Balwhidders".²⁾

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- 1) Edinburgh Essays on Scots Literature. John Galt - by Dr. Kitchin, p. 117, Edinburgh - 1933.
 - 2) The Annals of the Parish by John Galt, V. II, p. 68.

IV

"In the composition of 'The Provost' I followed the same rule of art which seemed to me so proper in the 'Annals of the Parish', namely, to bring impression on the memory harmoniously together."¹

The impressions registered in this novel, were not those of the rural village of Dreghorn, but of the burgh of Irvine, Galt's environment as a boy. This time he was to chronicle the events shaping a Royal Burgh, in the same formative epoch, as that described in the Annals, though the periods overlap, and Provost Pawkie resigns office in the year after Waterloo, six years after the Rev. Micah Balwhidder's resignation.

That Galt intended the Provost to be a companion volume to the Annals is obvious, - the theme, the device, the style are similar (eg. Mr. Balwhidder himself, Mr. Kilpuddy and Mr. Keelevine- Provost. p.43) are even mentioned in the Provost, but the prevailing atmosphere of Gudetown is skilfully differentiated from that of the sweet pastoral village of Dalmailing.

This distinction is mainly suggested, firstly by the nature of the events chronicled, and secondly by the nature of the narrator. The incidents described in The Provost /

1. The Literary Life. Vol.I. p.231. and Miscellanies by John Galt.

^{are} Provost and those of a bustling progressing Royal Burgh; worldliness, intrigue and political engineering are all behind the elections, council-dinners, balls, the paving and lighting of streets; and as a match for the intricacy of such affairs, is the character of the provost himself, sly in humour and business, a decent man, with a sense of the responsibility and dignity of his office, not to mention of the family position that should match his public honour.

In atmosphere, this is far removed from the Annals and from the character of Dalmailing's pastor, with his touch of other-worldliness, and pious simplicity. The rare quality of the Annals, the pastoral sweetness, is necessarily missing in The Provost by virtue of the subject, but in its place, there is another merit, usually lacking in Galt's Scottish Novels, and that is, unity. The Provost is contained in one volume: it is not as diffuse as The Annals, partly because the scene and the business is limited to municipal affairs: a parish is often widespread, and a country minister has opportunities of coming into contact with a wider range of types than a provost of a small town.

Galt had his plan well under hand, and in the introduction to The Provost, though speaking as the fictitious editor of The Annals and of Provost Pawkie's diary, has but done justice to the method he employed in the novel.

"We cannot but felicitate ourselves on the complete
and /

and consistent form into which we have so successfully reduced our precious materials."¹

The diary of The Provost deals more summarily with the period under consideration than the chronicles of the Rev. Mr. Balwhidder, but whether in diary or in chronicle both are successful in revealing the writers' characters.

As Provost Pawkie reveals or partly reveals himself, for as Sir George Douglas suggested in his study of Galt, the writer's instinct was too true to allow him to disclose all "the workings of so subtle a mind,"² the portrait becomes so realistic, that the reader is convinced that behind the printed portrait, stands a model of flesh and blood. And this is so, as Galt describes for us in his Autobiography.

"But besides exhibiting a tolerably correct picture of a Scottish burgh, I had in view, while writing it, a gentleman who, when I was a boy at school, had the chief management of the corporation in my native town. He was unblemished in reputation, with considerable talent for his sphere, and it was alleged possessed that pawkie art in which the hero is delineated to have excelled. I left the place when about ten years old, but his peculiarities had even /

1. The Provost. p.3. by John Galt.

2. The "Blackwood Group" by Sir George Douglas. Famous Scots Series - John Galt - p.67:

even then struck me, and when I determined on composing a companion to the Annals of the Parish he seemed to have been made for me. I believed he was dead and had no scruple about choosing him for my model."¹

Years later after The Provost had been published, on Galt's return from his first Canadian voyage, accompanied by his mother and sister, in passing through Ayrshire he was offered the freedom of the burgh of Irvine. To his utter amazement, this was presented in the clerk's chamber, by no other than his old friend.² "The sight upon me for a moment was an apparition, but I was recalled to myself by the manner in which he delivered the diploma, with an address -Provost Pawkie himself could never have said anything half so good.

His speech partook of his character, and evinced a degree of good sense, of tact and taste, though delivered in the Scottish dialect quite extraordinary."

This worthy gentleman was Baillie Fullerton. In the portrait by James Tanmoch in Irvine Council Chamber the Baillie is shown as an elderly man, with small keen eyes, a long and powerful nose, and a thin, purposeful mouth.

The Provost of the tale starts his career as a cloth mercer, married to the daughter of an inn-keeper: both in comfortable circumstances. The shop is a focal point in small town life, and its owner could sound opinion, and /

1. The Autobiography Vol.II. p.231. by John Galt.

2. The Autobiography, Vol.II. p.232. by John Galt.

and sense the way the wind was blowing, but all was done with great caution, and no effort was spent needlessly.

"Being thus settled in a shop and in life, I soon found that I had a part to perform in the public world. But I looked warily about me, before casting my nets, and therefore I laid myself out rather to be entreated than to ask, for I had often heard Mr. Remnant observe that the nature of man could not abide to see a neighbour taking place and preferment of his own accord, I therefore assumed a soothing and obliging demeanour towards my customers and the community in general, and sometimes even with the very beggars, I found a jocose saying as well received as a bawbee."¹

In this prologue, as it were, to the recital of his career, all the provost's latent characteristics are suggested, prudence in forwarding a deliberate policy, jocosity that bought popularity with no cost to its owner, and knowledge of human nature.

Already the older folk, who frequented the shop referred to "the Baillie and "my lord"; the which jocular derision was as a symptom and foretaste within their spirits of what I was ordained to be."²

After this, his goal, known to him, in his heart of hearts, was to rise to "the top of all the town."

First of all he had to be elected to the council.

At /

1. The Provost. p.7. by John Galt.

2. The Provost. p.9. by John Galt.

At the baptism of their second child, the cousin of Mr. Pawkie's father, one Mr. Alexander Clues, the deacon convener, dropped a hint that Mr. Pawkie might be prepared to fill the first vacancy in the Council, and although Mr. Pawkie replied cannily, Mrs. Pawkie showed opportune indiscretion (a characteristic exploited by her husband at times, to further his business), by crying out :-

"Na, na, gudeman, ye need na be sae mim; everybody kens, and I ken too, that ye're ettling at the magistracy. It's as plain as a pikestaff, gudeman, and I'll no let ye rest if ye dinna mak me a bailie's wife, or a' be done." ¹

Mr. Pawkie's sentiments being thus sounded, on the death of Bailie Macklehose, he was elected to the vacancy, as much "by the moderation and prudence with which I had been secretly ettling at the honour," ² as by the efforts of Mr. Shavings, deacon of the wrights, who had spoken to the craft, on Mr. Pawkie's behalf.

Once installed as a council member, Mr. Pawkie began his long reign of astute diplomacy and manoeuvring for position - "to rule without being felt, which is the great mystery of policy." ³

He /

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1. The Provost p.10. by John Galt.
 2. The Provost p.14. by John Galt.
 3. The Provost p.14. by John Galt.

He watched with interest and close attention how unsuccessfully the council disguised their private aims under a pretence of public service, so that "the cloven foot of self-interest was now and then to be seen anent the robe of public principle."¹

Mr. Pawkie's own deductions reveal a certain self-deception. He maintains that his policy was to "overcome all their wiles and devices by a straightforward course" and yet - he cannot help noticing that he has "to a certainty reaped advantage both in my own person, and that of my family, either by luck or good guidance or by both," and though he rightly maintains that "no man living can accuse me of having bent any single thing pertaining to the town and public from the natural uprightness of its integrity, in order to serve my own private ends"² he exhibits in his career a wonderful blend of public interest and private speculation.

On being admitted to the Council, Pawkie instantly ^{there} perceived that/were in it two factions - "the one party being strong for those of the King's government of ministers, and the other no less vehement on the side of their adversaries."³

Like the Rev. Micah Balwhidder, Mr. Pawkie upheld the authority of the Government, and "girded" himself for the undertaking.⁴

1. The Provost, p.15. by John Galt.

2. The Provost, p.15. by John Galt.

3. The Provost, p.15. by John Galt.

4. The Provost, p.16. by John Galt.

An opportunity to show his loyalty was proffered to the new councillor at the first contested Election. Since the Union of the Parliaments in 1707, the Scottish Burghs could elect fifteen members of the House of Commons. Of these Burghs certain, for the purposes of election were grouped together as one district, and delegates, selected by the various councils within that district, met together to choose one common representative.

The delegate from Gudetown was Provost Picklan, but to effect some changes in the Burgh, Mr. Pawkie manoeuvred to get the dean of guild elected instead. This dean was a "slee tod" called Mr. Andrew McLucre.

However Mr. McLucre on that very afternoon of the day on which he was elected delegate, sold the potato crops on his back rig by way of public roup, and of course, in token of future service expected the new candidate for the election one "Mr. Galore (the great Indian nabob that had bought the Beerland estates and built the grand palace that is called Lucknoo House, coming from London, with the influence of the crown on his side to oppose the old member") bought them at upwards of three guineas the peck, and also presented Mrs. McLucre and the bailie's three daughters presents of new gowns and princods that were not stuffed with wool."

"In the end, as a natural consequence, Ballie McLucre as delegate voted for the nabob, and the old member was thereby thrown out." But Mr. Pawkie, though pleased at the success of the Government candidate, was so wrath at the political profligacy of the Baillie, that "we had no /

no correspondence on public affairs till long after."¹

One result of this split however, was most convenient for Pawkie, for "he never had the face to ask me to give up the guildry till I resigned it of my own accord."²

The touch about the Nabob suggests that Galt is hinting that new interests will be represented in the Parliament of the future as a result of expansion of trade and commerce and of Scottish connection with the East, and that the time has come for a redistribution of members in burgh election.

The nabob, type of the successful Scot returned from his Eastern enterprise, was ready to settle in the fine soft climate of Western Scotland, take an interest in progressive agriculture on his lands, dabble in local government, invest shares in newly struck coal "heughs" or in cotton mills, in fact generally associate himself with progress and the spirit of the age in opposition to the conservative land-proprietors of the type that still lingered on from the past, on their shrunken and burdened estates, viewing with ill-concealed envy the inroads of the newcomers.

This subject and the change of relationships between classess, keenly interested Galt and he returns to it again and again in his Scottish novels. Mr. Galore is an echo from the more fully developed study of Mr. Cayenne in /

1.The Provost, p.27 by John Galt.

2.The Provost, p.27. by John Galt.

in the "Annals of the Parish. As has been said, he was, to attack the whole subject as the main theme in his novel - "The Last of the Lairds."

The next public action of Mr. Pawkie was his exertion in the choice of a new minister. Here again, he exhibited his twofold purpose of loyalty to an established creed, and a bettering of his private interests "Dr. Swapkirk" having had an apoplexy, the magistrates were obligated to get Mr. Pittle to be his helper". This young man had no "smeddum" in his discourse, and "his sermons in the warm summer afternoons were just a perfect hushabna"¹

The same Mr. Pittle however, had an affection for "my wife's full cousin a Miss Lizy Pinkie" or, says Mr. Pawkie frankly, "for her legacy of £700," and as Miss Pinkie was not of an ^{and} "eyedent turn"/often wearied, she gaed maybe now and then oftener to the gardevin ~~than~~ ^{was} just necessar, by which, as we thought, she had a taver look"². Clearly Miss Lizy Pinkie stood in need of a protector, Mr. Pawkie used all his influence with the Provost and by means of a bargain of fifty acres of the town moor with Baillie McLucre, procured his aid in placing and settling Mr. Pittle in the parish.

The characters are not romantic, the marriage is largely one of arrangement and the bargain for Gudetown is doubtful. As Mr. Crockett says in his introduction to The Provost, Mr. Pawkie shows a "melancholy indifference"³ to Mr. Pittle's sermons. As long as he prayed for King and magistrates /

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1. The Provost, p.37. by John Galt.
 2. The Provost, p.59 by John Galt.
 3. Introduction p. xvii. Works of J.Galt edited by D.S.Meldrum & Wm. Roughead. Vol.X.(by S.R. Crockett.)

magistrates, and exhorted the congregation to uphold the law, Mr. Pittle was performing all that could be required of any minister.

But Mr. Pawkie did not stop at the Deaconship of the Guild; that was but a step in the right direction: next, he was elected Baillie and shortly after that, became the Provost.

After sundry experiences in local government as Provost, Mr. Pawkie came to the conclusion "that it was a better thing in the world to have power and influence than to show the possession of either,"¹ and, being the only local magistrate in a state of sobriety at a dinner given by the 'earl', the great man of the neighbourhood, to the Town Council, he was able to seize the opportunity afforded in a few minutes of private conversation, to persuade the noble gentleman to allow himself to be elected Provost in name while he, Pawkie, would transact all the actual business. This actually came to pass, and the arrangement worked until Mr. Pawkie determined to retire even further into the background.

"Still, however desiring to retain a mean of resuming my station, - and of maintaining my influence in the council, I bespoke Mr. Keg to act in my place as deputy for my lord, who was regularly every year at this time chosen into the provosty."²

By /

1. The Provost, p.59. by John Galt.

2. The Provost, p.67. by John Galt.

By thus constituting himself the power behind the throne, Mr. Pawkie became indispensable to Gudetown, was elected provost a second time, in 1787 for two years, and a third and last time in 1813.

Firstly, then Galt's book is taken up by giving the reader insight into the politics of a small town, the electing of Deacons, Baillies, and Provosts, and the contesting of the burgh's; secondly by his descriptions and explanations of improvements introduced during the provost's terms of office; thirdly by anecdotes, told with great power and pathos of historical or semi-historical events that occurred during the period covered by The Provost.

As in the Annals, Galt introduces all types of small town society, from the worthies to the most raffish; tinkers, gipsies, and idiots come into both. As Crockett says - "If some censors think the village idiots of the "Annals" mother and daughter, overdrawn in their fantastic misery, and in the dignity of the daughter's grief the most fastidious cannot press this charge against Jean Gaisling."¹

The tragic fate of Jean Gaisling occurred during Mr. Pawkie's term as Baillie.

A few revealing strokes present Jean and her pedigree to the reader. Jean, "the daughter of a donsie mother /

1. Introduction p.xix to The Provost by S.R. Crockett.

mother that could gie no name to her gets" was the "bonniest lassie in the whole town, but light-headed, and fonder of outgait and blether in the causey than was discreet of one of her uncertain parentage."¹

However, "on the very evening of the same day that I was first chosen to be a bailie a sore affair came to light in the discovery that Jean Gaisling had murdered her bastard bairn."²

Galt probably felt the harshness of the law against infanticide, as did Scott. Like that of Effie Deans, in "The Heart of Midlothian", Jeanie's youth and beauty brought her sympathy but no reprieve, and as she had no selflessly devoted sister to obtain a pardon in person from the King, Jeanie was condemned to die. The scene as described by Galt has amazing power, Bailie Pawkie is a man of feeling.

"Nothing could exceed the compassion that every one had for poor Jeanie, so she wasna committed to a common cell, but laid in the council-room, where the ladies of the town made up a comfortable bed for her, and some of them sat up all night and prayed for her. But her thoughts were gone, and she sat silent."³

Even in this scene of pathos, realism does not escape, Thomas Gimlet, the master-of-work, and deacon of the wrights, who created the scaffold "had a good penny of profit by the job, for he contracted with the town-council, and /

1. The Provost, p.45 by John Galt.

2. The Provost, p.45. by John Galt.

3. The Provost, p.48. by John Galt.

and had the boards after the business was done to the bargain."

However, the abiding feeling is one of deep pity. Willie, Jean's young brother, is standing at the foot of the scaffold, "in an open ring made round him in the crowd, every one compassionating the dejected laddie, for he was a fine youth and of an orderly spirit.

As his sister came towards the foot of the ladder, he ran towards her, and embraced her with a wail of sorrow that melted every heart, and made us all stop in the middle of our solemnity. Jeanie looked at him, (for her hands were tied), and a silent tear was seen to drop from her cheek. But in the course of little more than a minute, all was quiet, and we proceeded to ascend the scaffold. Willy, who had by this time dried his eyes, went up with us, and when Mr. Pittle had said the prayer, and sung the psalm, in which the whole multitude joined, as it were with the contrition of sorrow, the hangman stepped forward to put on the fatal cap but Willy took it out of his hand, and placed it on his sister himself, and then kneeling down with his back to her closing his eyes and shutting his ears with his hands, he saw not nor heard when she was launched into eternity."¹

This plain and simple account is more heartrending than any more subtle analysis would be and shows how surely Galt could handle a situation where pathos deepened into tragedy. /

1. The Provost, p.50 by John Galt.

tragedy. We are left too with the knowledge that Bailie Pawkie has a tender heart. Quite in keeping with the realism of this incident, is the last sentence appended to the chapter.

"As for the mother, we were obligated, in the course of the same year, to drum her out of the town for stealing thirteen choppin bottles from William Gallon's, the vintners and selling them for whisky to Maggy Picken, that was tried at the same time for the reset."¹

The next stirring events and changes in Gudetown take place during Mr. Pawkie's first term as Provost. To prove that the position is no sinecure, and that a burgh can deal roughly with its provost and council, Mr. Pawkie gives an account of a riot on the King's birthday, caused by the magistrates stopping the usual custom of providing a cart of coals for the bonfire. As the council is drinking a toast to the King at the Cross, the mob rushes them, and amid the "outcry", "terrification" and "roaring", they are borne back to the Council Chamber, from the windows of which the Provost read the Riot Act, but - "the moment that I had ended, a dead cat came whizzing through the air like a comet, and gave me such a clash on the face that I was knocked down to the floor, in the middle of the very Council-chamber."²

As a result of this indignity, the Provost deems it expedient to "send off an express to Ayr for the regiment of soldiers /

1. The Provost, p.55 by John Galt.

2. The Provost, p.56 by John Galt.

soldiers that was quartered there."¹ "And a woeful warning it was of the consequences that follow rebellion and treasonable practices, for, to the present day, we have always had a portion of every regiment, sent to Ayr, quartered upon us."²

The more boisterous effects of this picture, but serve to make the entire impression of Gudetown more complete - the louder colours are supplied. Incidentally, the same kind of scene appears in a modern Scots playwright's study of a modern Scots provost in a small town. Provost Thomson in James Bridie's play - *Storm in a Teacup*, - has to face the jeers and missiles of his townsmen, congregated under his windows. However Thomson is a self-opinionated bully, whose ambitions make him ride rough-shod over the people, to his misfortune in the long run. His character is entirely unattractive, unlike the canny, amiable Provost Pawkie.

In the interval, between his first and second Provostry, some awkward crises arose, and as they were mishandled by the magistrates in power, this enhanced Mr. Pawkie's reputation. There was the incident of the French spy, a matter which agitated Gudetown, "for the American war was then raging and the French had taken the part of the Yankee rebels"³. The suspicious character referred to, who "had toozy black whiskers, was lank and wan and /

1. The Provost - p.56, by John Galt.

2. The Provost - p.57. by John Galt.

3. The Provost - p.62, by John Galt.

and moreover deformed beyond human nature, with a parrot nose, and had no cravat, but only a bit black riband drawn through two button-holes fastening his ill-coloured sark neck which gave him altogether something of an unwholesome, outlandish appearance,"¹ turned out to be none other than "a French cook, coming over from Dublin, with the intent to take up the trade of a confectioner in Glasgow," and the supposed map of the Clyde found on him, was nothing but a plan for the outset of a fashionable table - the bailie's island of Arran being the roast-beef, and the craig of Ailsa the plum-pudding, and Plada a butter-boat."²

Bailie Booble who had had the miserable creature sent with two dragoons and a King's messenger to Edinburgh Castle, was mightily chagrined.

Apart from the humour displayed, this incident shows us, as in the Annals, how the impact of great world events is but slight on little towns and villages in the Scotland of the 1770's, though there was some knowledge of the peril in which Britain stood, with practically a European coalition against her, and all sympathy with the American rebels.

During the provost's sequestration, there occurred the incident of the Meal Mob, when the farmers would not lower their prices, and "the wives that went to the meal-market came back wailing with toom pocks and basins."³
The /

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1. The Provost, p.63, by John Galt.
 2. The Provost, p.66, by John Galt.
 3. The Provost, p.68, by John Galt.

The riot, which had burst out when the farmers were loading their carts to go home, was started by "tinkler Jean, a randy that had been with the army at the siege of Gibraltar, and for aught I ken, in the Americas, if no in the Indies likewise,"¹ and the market place was soon "as white with scattered meal as if it had been covered with snow."²

While Mr. Pawkie, with his shop shuttered, stood composedly at his dining-room window, "very thankful that I wasna provost in such a hurricane," he saw Mr. Keg, "pale as a dishclout running to and fro bareheaded." However Pawkie intervenes when the soldiers are about to fire at the mob by reminding their commanding officer that the Riot Act has not been read. When this was done, "as if they had seen the glimpse of a terrible spirit in the air, the whole multitude dropped the dirt and stones out of their hands, and, turning their backs, flew into doors and closes and were skailed before we knew where we were."³

Mr. Pawkie comes well out of this incident, with a letter of thanks from the Lord Advocate, but he comments, in one of those moving passages, that Galt will suddenly produce, on the poignant aftermath of this riot.

"Many a decent auld woman that had patiently eked out the slender thread of aweary life with her wheel, in privacy, her scant and want known only to her Maker, was seen going from door to door with the salt tear in her e'e, and looking /

1. The Provost, p.69, by John Galt.

2. The Provost, p.70, by John Galt.

3. The Provost, p.71. by John Galt.

looking in the face of the pitiful, being as yet unacquainted with the language of beggary."¹

In 1789, Pawkie as aforementioned was elected Provost for the second time, and during the next two years was able to introduce improvements into the burgh, such as the repair of the main street and of Kirk pews, and the gradual suppression of the old Fairs and Trade parades.

As proof of the loyalty of the burgh, came the first crop of volunteers, and with their formation, all the delicate engineering connected with the appointment of affairs. Because of his corpulency, the Provost did not take an active part, but got the contract for the clothing of the men.

Again, Galt would be recollecting his young days, when as a youth of fifteen in 1794, he became the youngest member of the Greenock Volunteer Force. As to the dangerous democratic doctrines in the burgh of Gudetown, although there were some disaffected persons, notoriously those who tried to thwart Provost Pawkie's schemes, he could remark with tolerable complacency.

"I think upon the whole, however, that our royal burgh was not afflicted to any very dangerous degree though there was a sort of itch of it among a few sedentary orders, such as the weavers and shoemakers, who, by the nature of sitting long in one posture, are apt to become subject to the flatulence of theoretical opinions."²

During /

1. The Provost, p.72, by John Galt.

2. The Provost, p.91, by John Galt.

During the French War, in contrast to the Volunteering spirit was the pressgang recruiting of men for the Navy. This is one of the most powerfully done Chapters in the book. It is as if the sea wet Galt's imagination working and sea-faring of course was in his blood, for the other chapter in the book, equal to this, in pathos, deepening to tragedy, is the account of the Windy Yule, when the ships were battered to destruction by the fierce gales off shore. Once more Galt was drawing from what he had actually seen.

"From the time of this visit to Kilmarnock till finally removed from Irvine I have no very particular recollection except of a storm at sea of which a description is given in "The Provost."¹

The setting for the pressgang incident, the atmosphere and suggestion show Galt at his best; the utter quietness of the street, the stealthy footsteps, the sudden outcry, and then the full crescendo of the crowd. Crowd scenes are always well managed by Galt.

"Shortly after we had been in the council-room I opened the window and looked out; but all was still: the town was lying in the defencelessness of sleep, and nothing was heard but the clicking of the town-clock in the steeple over our heads. By-and-by, however, a sough and pattering of feet was heard approaching; and shortly after, in looking out, /

1. Autobiography, Vol.I. p.9. by John Galt.

out, we saw the pressgang, headed by their officers, with cutlassess by their side, and great club-sticks in their hands. They said nothing; but the sound of their feet on the silent stones of the causey was as the noise of a dreadful engine. They passed, and went on; and all that were with me in the council stood at the windows and listened. In the course of a minute or two after, two lasses with a callan, that had been out, came flying and wailing, giving the alarm to the town. Then we heard the driving of the bludgeons on the doors, and the outcries of terrified women; and presently after we saw the poor chased sailors running in their shirts, with their clothes in hands, as if they had been felons and blackguards caught in guilt, and flying from the hands of justice."¹

In contrast, the next chapter describes the trick of that gash old earl, the laird of Bodletonbrae, who at the Michaelmas dinner, egged on the magistrates to throw their wigs into the fire. Jocosely and rollicking, this scene has a Burns flavour about it.

The setting up of lamps, the paving of the "lones" with flags, "like the plainstones of Glasgow," and the putting up of "roans to kepp the rain,"² were all accomplished in this provostry.

By the time that the second crop of volunteers comes into being to resist the "rampageous" ambition of Buonaparte, Mr. Pawkie has sensed the feeling abroad.

"For /

1. The Provost, pp. 108-109, by John Galt.

2. The Provost, p.138, by John Galt.

"For by this time, I had learnt that there was a wakerife common sense abroad among the opinions of men; and the secret of the new way of ruling the world was to follow not to control, the evident dictates of the popular voice."

In fact the reader is left to wonder at that gentleman's skill and wisdom in guiding affairs; as for instance his way of making a revolutionary newspaper tractable and harmless of getting the schoolhouse repaired, and his "exquisitely balanced and remunerative neutrality"¹ in the election of 1812, - all enhance his power and dignity.

"It was at Michaelmas 1813 that I was chosen Provost for the third time."²

On this occasion, Provost Pawkie tells us that he felt a solemnity enter into the frame of his thoughts and "I became as it were a new man on the spot." He regrets his former "sinister respect for my own interests," and felt elevated by the thought that he "had lived to partake of the purer spirit which the great mutations of the age had conjured into public affairs."³ With prosperity had come probity : he had no need to be "grippy" any more, but he persuaded himself that both the times and the man had improved, and at best, it was an amiable self-deception.

His changed principles are noticeable in the sober way in which he assists, in the appointing of a new minister on the death of the feckless Mr. Pittle. Gone is his indifference to the preaching. The most weighty and best /

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1. S.R. Crockett, Introduction p.xxiii, The Provost.
 2. The Provost, p.213, by John Galt.
 3. The Provost, p.213. by John Galt.

best considered of the councillors and elders"¹ were anxious to obtain the services of Dr. Whackdeil of Kirkbogle. By the name, Galt seems to be suggesting the resurgence of the more vehement strain of Evangelical preaching at the beginning of the nineteenth century, in contrast to the previous Moderate epoch. (See Chap.I.)

The decorum of the council was another care of Provost Pawkie in his third provostry. By threatening to resign if they did not get rid of two members of the body, who had raised a "stramash" in the council, he managed to have two more tractable men appointed.

Having got everything running smoothly, Provost Pawkie sensed that, anyhow, the time had come to resign: the aftermath of a war is a tricky time for a man of business and public affairs. However, despite the new disinterested tone of his discourse, Provost Pawkie is anxious not "to go out of office like a knotless thread" and argues that, "something was due to himself and family,"² and so he sets to work, hinting here, and nodding there, and speaking with a "circumbendibus"³ to good purpose. In fact, he works hard for a presentation.

Through the good offices of Mr. Mucklewheel the hosier, a Mr. Birkie (elected into the council, in place of Provost Pawkie) was primed to make a speech, substantially composed /

1. The Provost, p.221 by John Galt.

2. The Provost, p.237 by John Galt.

3. The Provost, p.238 by John Galt.

composed by the ex-Provost himself, "and he was very vogie with the notion of making a speech before the council, for, he was an upsetting young man."¹ Galt's Provost always knew his man and was in his own way, quite a subtle psychologist.

All this contriving is inimitably told by Galt, and the satisfaction of Provost Pawkie fairly oozes through the print.

"Thus had I the great satisfaction of going to my repose as a private citizen with a very handsome silver cup, bearing an inscription in the Latin tongue, of the time I had been in the council, guildry and magistracy; and although in the outset of my public life, some of my dealings may have been leavened with the leaven of antiquity, yet upon the whole it will not be found, I think, that, one thing weighed with another, I have been an unprofitable servant to the community."²

Certainly Gudetown was the better for a man like the Provost, who understood the ways and population of a Royal Burgh, its gentry and its simple, its bailies, shop-keepers, tinkers, idiots and drunken town-drummers.

Sometimes, "The Provost" has been compared with that other great character creation, Bailie Nicol Jarvie in Scott's novel - Rob Roy. Their respective authors however, have their attention focussed on different aspects of the scene. /

1. The Provost, p.243. by John Galt.

2. The Provost, p.243. by John Galt.

scene. Bailie Nicol Jarvie is in the novel of Rob Roy for the purpose of contrast - the well-to-do, law abiding Bailie - as against his wild Highland Kinsman, the free-booter, Rob Roy.

We are given less insight into the more prosaic picture of the Bailie's day-to-day life of bargaining and chaffering, and of the intricacies of town government. Scott was interested in the wider aspects, something more epic in scope, the internecine struggle of two races, two ways of life, that of the proud passionate Celt, ill-adjusted to an ordered mode of existence, dying defiantly for a creed that was feudal and outmoded, and the Lowland shopkeeper, spirited and humourous, law-abiding, and piling up his siller, yet "ready to hae grippet the best man in the Hielans".¹

Both the Provost and Bailie Nicol Jarvie have this in common - vitality. The stout little Glaswegian setting fire to the Highlander's plaid on that immortal night in the clachan of Aberfoyle is as real a person as the corpulent Bailie of Gudetown, disarming our criticism with his farewell words -

"Posterity therefore or I am far mistaken, will not be angered at my plain dealing with regard to the small motives of private advantage of which I have made mention, since, it has been my endeavour to show and to acknowledge that /

1. Rob Roy - p.184, Melrose Edition, by Sir Walter Scott.

that there is a reforming spirit abroad among men, and that really the world is gradually growing better - slowly I allow; but still it is growing better and the main profit of the improvement will be reaped by those who are ordained, to come after us."¹

Mr. Pawkie had been successful both as a shop-keeper and magistrate, and was disposed to be optimistic. It is doubtful whether his creator John Galt on his return from Canada, despite the material improvements of a mechanical age, which he saw around him, came to the same conclusion.

However Galt felt about the future of the world, he must have had pleasure in receiving contemporary congratulation on "The Provost". In his Autobiography, he tells us that Mr. Canning read it during a dull debate in the House,² and "spoke of it afterwards always with commendation."

The enthusiastic reviewer in Blackwood felt that he was composing it as he went along, it read so easily and naturally, and the modern reader might agree as to its truth, though not expressing his praise as fulsomely as the writer continues :-

"There is far more truth and nature, and moral philosophy and metaphysics and politics, and political economy, in this little volume than in all Dugald Stewart and the Scotsman."³

1. The Provost, p.244, by John Galt.

2. Autobiography Vol.II p.231 by John Galt.

3. Blackwood, Vol.XI. June 1822. p.743.

V.

Galt's ingenuity in inventing new projects for his tales, was not exhausted. In the same year as he composed *The Provost*, (1822) he had thought out another original character. The Scot was to be shown "on the make." The working out is new, the theme probably quite old. In the same year, (1822), Scott produced *The Fortunes of Nigel*, which followed the adventures of an impoverished young Scots noble, at the court of James VI and I in London, where swarms of needy Scots courtiers flocked, to mend their affairs. The English knew and recognised the type of impecunious Scot, and this may account for the popularity of Sir Andrew Wylie: in the character of his hero, Galt gathered together many of the characteristics popularly supposed to be Scottish, thriftiness, droll humour, and so on, but to these, he added manners, that were peculiar to Sir Andrew.

Had he confined himself to the rise of his humble hero, and to the portrayal of his character, Galt would have achieved perfection in a small way, but he allowed Andrew to become involved in the fortunes of a noble family, and the unravelling of those fortunes dragged the book to an undue length. The compact vigour of *The Provost* is lacking. Galt himself tells us in his Autobiography that the tale had been altered perhaps for the worse. As usual, he shows his dislike of comparing his composition to an ordinary novel.

"But of all my manifold sketches, I repine most at an alteration which I was induced by the persuasion of a friend /

friend to make on the original tale of Sir Andrew Wylie; as it now stands it is more like an ordinary novel, than that which I first projected, inasmuch as instead of giving, as intended, a view of the rise and progress of a Scotchman in London, it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end, according to the most approved fashion for works of that description."¹

In other words, the novel had a plot. Despite the unequal tone of the whole, Galt's writing is sure and convincing, where the setting is Scottish, as in the beginning and towards the end of the novel. The first eleven chapters trace very delightfully, the early years of the orphan "Wheelie under the care of his "maternal grandmother, Martha Docken, one of those clachan carlins who keep alive among the Scottish peasantry the traditions and sentiments which constitute so much of the national character."²

Surely Martha Docken and another like her, Claude Walkinshaw's old servant in *The Entail*, are drawn from Galt's memory of Irvine days, when as a delicate boy, he haunted a number of old women who "lived in the close behind my grandmother's house, and in their society to hear their tales and legends I was a frequent visitor."³

One of those might have been Martha Docken.⁴
 "Another of them was an old widow, bent into a hoop; she had an only son, but he was gone from her long before my time, and she /

1. The Autobiography, p.238, by John Galt.

2. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol.I. p.1. by John Galt.

3. Autobiography, Vol.I. p.9. by John Galt.

4. Autobiography, Vol.I. p.10. by John Galt.

she lived a lonely life. With this friendless aged widow I was a great favourite, and exceedingly attached to her, for she had many kindly qualities that won upon an infirm boy's best affections. She has often since served me as a model, not that her actual state has been depicted by me but I have imagined her in situations that were calculated to bring out her character. She was very poor, and spun out her low and wintry existence by her rock and tow. I have often assisted her to reel her pirns, and enjoyed strange pleasure in the narratives of her life and privations.

This is one of Galt's characteristic pictures that does not blink at the realism of poverty, old age and lack of friends. Perhaps in "Wheelie", Galt saw something of himself, first as the strange bairn with his attachment to the poor old woman, and later as the man of affairs; but there the likeness ends, for Galt never had the success, (nor the blithe homecoming) depicted for Wheelie.

The interior of Martha's cottage is described with great care, almost as though Galt was registering on paper his early recollection of an Ayrshire peasant's kitchen.

"The furniture of her cottage, in addition to Andrew's cradle (and that was borrowed) consisted of one venerable elbow-chair, with a tall perpendicular back - curiously carved - a family relic of better days, enjoyed by her own or her husband's ancestors; two buffet-stools, one a little larger than the other; a small oaken claw-foot table; a hand-reel, a Kail-pot, and a skillet, together with a scanty providing of bedding, and a chest that was at once coffer, wardrobe and ambry." ¹.

1. Sir Andrew Wylie, p.1. by John Galt.

A sketch, similar in its fidelity to fact, is that of Mrs. Soorock's cupboard in "The Last of the Lairds." To the social historian, then such descriptions are of great interest, and to the ordinary reader, they bear the stamp of verisimilitude.

Although the "heavy handful of Andrew, a weak and ailing baby, required no little care."¹ Martha declared him to be "great company."

Soon, he proved to be "an auld-farand bairn, and kent a raisin frae a black clock before he had a tooth; putting the taen in his mouth wi' a smirk, but skreighing like desperation at the sight o' the ither."²

Such ability in infancy was taken by his grandmother to be sure token of prosperous fortune, and in boyhood, she detected the same discriminating sagacity -

"he was a pawkie laddie, and if he wasna a deacon at book lair, he kent as weel as the maister himsel' how mony blue beans it taks to mak five."³

The lines along which Andrew was to develop were thus clearly indicated.

Dominie Tannyhill, "the maister", gave Galt the opportunity of introducing a delightful sketch of one of these mild scholars, who devoted their services, most inadequately remunerated, to the teaching of the young. Something /

1. Sir Andrew Wylie, p.2. by John Galt.

2. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol. I. p.2. by John Galt.

3. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol. I. by John Galt. p.3.

Something of their circumstances has been told in Chapter I and in Chapter II. Many, like Dominie Tannyhill had ability, coupled with an unworldliness which kept them forgotten or neglected, save by their immediate neighbours in sequestered villages.

Yet if he had character, the dominie, despite his poverty, was a great force for good in the community and Goldsmith's schoolmaster in *The Deserted Village*, shows him to be in eighteenth century village life, a man of versatile ability, consulted and respected by all. In the sparsely populated countryside, particularly in remote villages in Scotland, towards the end of the century, the minister and the schoolmaster between them, if they had the necessary character, bestowed a mellowing influence on the rude manners of their community. The second half of the eighteenth century saw days of moderation in the church, and a higher respect for learning in the church made its influence felt. Of Dominie Tannyhill Galt writes :-

"Everything in his appearance indicated a moderate spirit, in perfect accordance with the mildness of his manners, and his few and humble acquirements; but there was an apostolic energy in his thoughts, when his own feelings were roused, or when he addressed himself to move those of others, by which nature at times showed how willing she was, if fortune had so pleased, to make him a pathetic and impressive preacher."¹

His personal appearance matched his character.

"In /

1. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol.I. p 4. by John Galt.

"In his dress, the master was as remarkable as in his mind and manners. His linen was always uncommonly neat, and his coat and vest of raven grey, though long threadbare, never showed a broken thread or the smallest stationery speck of dust. His breeches, of olive thickset, were no less carefully preserved from stains; and his dark blue worsted gamashins, reaching above the knees in winter, not only added to the comfort of his legs, but protected his stockings. Between his cottage and the church, or in the still evenings when he was seen walking solitary along the untrodden parts of the neighboring moor, he wore a small cocked-hat, and, as his eyes were weak and tender, in bright weather he commonly slackened the loops and turning the point round, converted the upright gable of the back into a shade."¹

In a poem of many verses by Galt, called "A Scottish Welcome" there is a doggerel echo of this sketch:-

"And there's the Dominie, wi's black
Gamashins o'er his shoone;
His hose are aye outo'er his breeks,
His cockit hats no dune.
Be wi' us a' the worthy saint." (2)

Both versions at least suggest a type, if not an actual figure.

Dominie Tannyhill's "kindly disposition", his authority, not backed by "the taws, that dreaded satrap of Scottish didactic discipline,"³ won his pupil's affection. Perhaps Galt was thinking of his own more brusque /

1. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol.I. p.5. by John Galt.

2. The Literary Life (Vol.II, p.217) and Miscellanies
by John Galt.

3. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol.I. p.415, by John Galt.

brusque, but able schoolmasters of Greenock, Colin Lamont, and one McGregor, "an excellent teacher, but of a temper - every pupil remembers it."¹

However, Wheelie was a favourite with Dominie Tannyhill, who appreciated his "droll and whimsical remarks."² His nickname, Wheelie, he was given on the first day, when he arrived at school, with his A.B. board in his hand.

"After the dismissal of the school, as he was playing with the other boys on the highroad, a carriage and four horses, with outriders, happened to pass whirling along with the speed and pride of nobility. The school-boys, exhilarated by the splendour of a phenomenon rare in those days in Stoneyholm, shouted with gladness as it passed, and our hero animated the shout into laughter by calling out, -

'Weel dune, wee wheelie: the muckle ane canna catch you.'

From that time he was called 'Wheelie'; but, instead of being offended by it, as boys commonly are by their nicknames, he bore it with the greatest good-humour, and afterwards, when he had learned to write, marked his books and copies with 'Andrew Wheelie, his book.'³

From the start, Andrew is a lovable creature, and from the start, though he is an individualist, his drollery and good humour knit the hearts of his schoolfellows to him.

During Wheelie's school-days there occurred "the awful-like thing,"⁴ an incident that reveals Galt's understanding /

1. John Galt - Jenny Aberdein p.13.

2. Sir A. Wylie, Vol.I. p.5. by John Galt.

3. Sir A. Wylie, Vol.I. p.6. by John Galt.

4. Sir A. Wylie, Vol.I. p.13. by John Galt.

standing of schoolboys. The boys had given Wheelie a pyet or magpie, because it "was an auld-farand thing like himsel' and would learn mair wi' him than wi' ony other laddie at the school."¹

"Maggy" was a great thief and after repeated filching of the thread-papers of Miss Mizy Cunningham of the Craiglands, maiden-sister of the laird, and aunt of Willy and Mary Cunningham, great friends of Wheelie, the bird was caught by Miss Mizy, had her neck twisted, and "was flung out with such fury at Andrew that it almost knocked him down."

This was monstrous injustice to schoolboy minds and hearts, "and the whole school participated in the revenge which was vowed against the murderer of Maggy."²

"Next day, the principal companions of Andrew provided themselves with a large tub, which they filled with water from the laird's stable-yard; and Andrew, going up to the window, where Miss Mizy was again sitting at her seam, while the other conspirators were secretly bringing the tub under the window, cried, 'Ye auld rudons, what gart you kill my pyet? Odd, I'll mak you rue that. Nae wonder ye ne'er got a man, ye cankery runt, wi' your red neb and your tinkler tongue.'

This was enough. Miss Mizy rose like a tempest; the same moment, souse came the unsavoury deluge from the tub, /

1. Sir Andrew Wylie, p.8. by John Galt.

2. Sir Andrew Wylie, p.12. by John Galt.

tub, full in her face, to the total wreck and destruction of all the unfinished bravery of mournings which lay scattered around."¹

The direct outcome of this was that Willy Cunningham was sent to an academy, suitable to his rank and prospects, for the laird, his father, characteristically represented by Galt, as troubling himself "very little with any earthly thing," and allowing his estate to go to rack and ruin, was jolted out of his torpor by "the awfu'-like thing."

The schoolboys were kept in for an extra two hours every day, by their earnest instructor, who saw in this, no punishment for himself, and in addition, Wheelie, as owner of the "misleart" pyet had to learn the first fifty psalms by heart. From then on, at all leisure hours, Wheelie was to be seen, sitting "in the lee of a headstone in the churchyard, muttering verse after verse from the Psalm-book, which he held in his hand."²

And there Mary Cunningham found him one day and through hearing him recite his psalms, felt an affection for him which was to be life-long, "and leaning over the tombstone, with Andrew sitting below, she listened with unwearied pleasure to the undeviating and inflexible continuance of his monotonous strain."³

With Willy Cunningham removed from his sphere,
Andrew /

1. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol.I. p.11. by John Galt.

2. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol.I. p.16. by John Galt.

3. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol.I. p.17. by John Galt.

Andrew was without a boon companion, until a Mrs. Pierston, widow of a Glasgow merchant, rented the mailing of Woodside, and settled there with her "fine, smart, rattling boy, Charles."¹

"The buoyancy of Pierston's spirits gave him a seeming ascendancy over Wylie; but it was soon observed by the neighbours that, in reality, Andrew was the master, and that, by submitting to the pranks and whims of Charles in small affairs, he uniformly obtained the management of things of greater moment, if such language may be applied to concerns of schoolboys."²

After certain boyish escapades, Charles was removed to a neighbouring town to complete his education, "where he continued till he was summoned to London by an Uncle, a great city merchant." In vacations, the boys renewed their friendships but their different environments were obviously influencing their characters. Charles "was every year developing more and more into a spruce and tonish gallant, while Andrew, bred up in rustic poverty and without any definite views as to his future life, settled into a little gash carlie, remarkable chiefly for a straightforward simplicity. His drollery and good-humour, however, rendered him a familiar and prodigious favourite with everybody; and although few in the parish were perhaps more destitute of any visible means of rising in the world, a confident belief was entertained among all who knew him that he was destined to become a rich man: - a great one, none /

1. Sir A. Wylie, Vol.I. p.22. by John Galt.

2. Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol.I. p.23 by John Galt.

none ever ventured to anticipate; nothing indeed could be more opposite to any idea of personal grandeur than his small, short, round-headed figure, smooth apple-cheeks, and little twinkling eyes."¹

By this stage, the droll little figure has gained the affections of the reader, who is prepared to follow his future career on a larger stage.

"As Andrew was rendered unfit by his feeble frame for the drudgery of a farmer, his grandmother, actuated in her humble sphere by the national spirit, resolved to spare no cost on his education"² But was it to be the Kirk, the law or medicine? Old Martha took her troubles to Dominie Tannyhill, Together, they decided that Andrew had better be apprenticed to "John Gledd, the messenger, wha was sib to his mother."³

Clad in his father's clothes, made down, Andrew went to Kilwinning, to John Gledd's desk, "John having, on the first application, immediately agreed to lighten Martha's band of the boy; for however strict in the harsh offices of caption and horning, he had the friendly spirit of the poor man among the poor, and was ever ready to the utmost stretch of his narrow means, to help a neighbour in need."⁴

This kindly master having fallen ill, old Martha and Andrew make the tremendous decision that Andrew "should try his luck in London, that great city,"⁵ as Martha's niece /

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1. Sir A. Wylie, Vol.I. p.33. by John Galt.
 2. Sir A. Wylie, Vol.I. p.35. by John Galt.
 3. Sir A. Wylie, Vol.I. p.38, by John Galt.
 4. Sir A. Wylie, Vol.I. p.42, by John Galt.
 5. Sir A. Wylie, Vol.1. p.49, by John Galt.

niece, a Mrs Ipsey was the wife of an old solicitor there. Mr Ipsey had retired but spoke on Andrew's behalf to his successor, Mr. Vellum, who was willing to take Andrew in. Andrew's luck in his apprenticeship period, was due then, to the clannishness of his Scots relations.

After kindly advice from Dominie Tannyhill, and a perfunctory blessing from the minister, Dr. Dozadeal, so indifferent a pastor as compared with the "meek and pious Mr Balwhidder" or "the much-celebrated Dr Zachariah Pringle",¹⁾ Andrew sets off early one morning with the carrier. There is a freshness about that morning, that Galt somehow captures -

"In the morning on which our hero was to bid a long adieu to his native village, he was awake and stirring with the lark. It was the eye of summer, and the weather was clear and beautiful. The smoke rose from his grandmother's chimney as straight as a column and stood over it like a high-spreading tree, long before the symptoms of housewifery appeared in any other cottage in the hamlet; for the Glasgow carrier was to pass at sunrise, and Andrew was requested to be in readiness by that time to go with him. When the carrier stopped to call him, he came instantly out alone, with his box on his shoulder, and the door was immediately closed behind; no one saw Martha till long after he was out of sight. The master, who was abroad to convoy him a part of his way, was the first who visited her, /

1) Sir A. Whyte. Vol I. p. 52, by John Galt.

her, and he found her sitting with the Bible on her knee, wiping her spectacles:- there were drops on the page which showed¹⁾ what had dimmed the glasses."

This is classic, in the dignity and restraint of the picture, and in the simplicity and truth with which he interprets the best of the old Scottish country tradition.

From Glasgow, where he viewed the "ferlies and uncoss", he travelled to Linlithgow and thence to Edinburgh, where he encountered Mary Cunningham, now a "tall elegant girl" with her governess -

"Did ye ever see such a modiwart like thing?" said Mary laughingly, turning to the governess; "but he's as pawkie as a fairy. Can ye say a' your fifty psalms yet, Wheelie?"

"Maybe I might, an' ye would hearken me again," was his answer - a little curiously, however. But to this Mary made no direct reply saying only -

"What are ye come to Edinburgh for?"

"I'm on my way to London."

"To London, Wheelie!" exclaimed Mary with astonishment, and then she added, briskly, "And so ye ha'ena made your fortune at Kilwinning?"

Andrew blushed, and looked his reply.

"Miss Cunningham," interposed the governess, "this is a very improper conversation."

"With /

1) Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol. I. p. 59 by John Galt.

"With a buoyant bosom and a light step, he pursued his way to Leith, where he immediately went on board the vessel that¹⁾ was to him the bark of destiny."

From his entry into London Society until near the end of the novel, when he emerges safe and sound on his Ayrshire soil again, Sir Andrew appears as a Scotch curiosity, incongruously placed in London society, a freak in fact, yet preordained for the most brilliant and unaccountable success, by his author.

As we read of his adventures, we feel as did the contemporary reviewer in Blackwood's Magazine:-

"He no sooner shews his face in company, high or low, but he ups with the first fiddle, and leads the band."

- "He mounts up by a flight of enchanted steps from Chambermaid to Countess - from my lass to my Lady - from my gentleman's gentleman to Lord - Earl - Duke - Prince - King:

Yet somehow or another, this continual success of the odd little Baronet, is, during the perusal of his Memoir not felt to be unnatural. I suspect there is great genius shown in the conception of such a character and considerable skill too²⁾ in the execution."

The reviewer is quite right; having once accepted Andrew on his own terms, the reader is not surprised at most of his achievements, though the author has asked for much "willing suspension of disbelief".

His meteoric rise to fame is explained, not by any great /

1) Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol I. pp 68-69, John Galt.

2) Blackwood's Magazine - Vol. XI, June 1822. p. 742-3.

great talents, but by his droll humour and his "intuitive¹⁾ perception of the manageable points of character", by which two characteristics he even subdues a king!

Towards the end, as his return to Scotland is fore-shadowed more stress is laid on other qualities, his unfailing attention towards his humble grandmother, his helping hand to those in distress, prudent not lavish, and his real warmth of heart. Indeed, one of his fashionable ladies, Countess Sandyford, is made to remark, "But there is so much heart about him - he²⁾ is all heart".

Moreover his "original and indestructible simplicity"³⁾ even at the height of success, present to the sophisticated aristocrats, a delightful novelty. This blunt simplicity of manner, so different from the elegant languor of society, was accentuated by his insignificant figure, and to begin with, his countrified clothes. To his antagonists, like Miss Mizy of the Craiglands, he is a "moudiwart thing" to Mary and the Sandyfords who love him - "a pawkie fairy".

But the shrewd little Scot knows not only when to discard his rough clothes, but also his native tongue. To begin⁴⁾ with he had realised "the cash value of a Scots tongue" in London, and persisted in his eccentric manners. When he hears from Mr. Vellum that the Earl of Sandyford is resolved to settle on him seven hundred and fifty pounds for seven years, he accepts his good fortune quite calmly. Mr. Vellum admonishes him:-

"but now that you have gained your ends, and by his lordship's generosity are placed in a condition to support the appearance /

1) Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol II, p. 2. by John Galt.

2) " " " " p 280 " "

3) " " " " p 55 " "

4) Edinburgh Essays on Scots Literature. John Galt by Dr. Kitchin p.117. (Edinburgh 1933)

appearance of a gentleman, I hope you will set in seriously to your profession and throw off your ridiculous manners for the future."

"That would be a doing indeed!" exclaimed our hero, "when you are just at this precious moment telling me that they¹⁾ have already brought me in seven hundred and fifty pounds a year."

However, on his return to Stoneyholme - "He had indeed resolved in his own mind to resume his former familiarity, as well as the broad accent of his boyish dialect: not that the latter required any effort, for he had carefully and constantly preserved it, but he had unconsciously adopted a few terms and phrases purely English, and, in the necessity of speaking intelligently to his clients and fashionable friends, had habitually acquired, without any of the southern tone, considerable²⁾ purity of language."

Needless to say, where Wylie indulges in this anglicization, the tone is colourless and the verve and pawkie expression are sadly missed.

His author is as awkward as his hero. During all the intricacies of Andrew's London adventures, there is the hollow tone of affectation about Galt's English, a stilted, Latinized self-conscious English, written by a Scot in imitation of fashionable English novels of the period. This language of a Johnsonese variety, shows Galt to be an inheritor of the 18th century, just as his free and easy use of the vernacular, proclaims him to be a pioneer in a new school of novelists.

The /

1) Sir Andrew Wylie Vol. I. p. 179 by John Galt.

2) Sir Andrew Wylie Vol II, p. 246 by John Galt.

The actual writing probably accounts for the artificiality of Galt's presentation of English aristocrats, for he had first-hand knowledge of many brilliant and talented people, who honoured him for his own qualities; among these were the Duke of Kent, Lord Byron, and the famous Blessingtons. The manipulation of lordly character did not ring false to all contemporaries, for Galt tells us of the Earl of Blessington's approval in his Autobiography.

"The second edition was inscribed to my amiable friend the Earl of Blessington, in consequence of a remark which his Lordship made to me when he was reading it; speaking of Lord Sandyford's character, he observed, that it must be very natural, for, in the same circumstances, he would have acted in a similar manner, and he seemed not to have the least idea, that he was himself the model of the character; perhaps I never received so pleasing a compliment."¹⁾

And it is in a letter to Lady Blessington, that beautiful and gifted hostess of many a literary salon, that we get an inkling of Sir Andrew's popularity among the English. Writing from Liverpool, Galt says:-

"My reception has been exceedingly flattering, and not the least influential of my friends is that excellent bodie, Sir Andrew Wylie."²⁾

Certain almost legendary characteristics of the Scot, Andrew /

1) The Autobiography, Vol. II. p. 239 by John Galt.

2) Letter dated Liverpool, 27th July, 1822 - quoted in The Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington (p.234). ed. R.R. Madden, 3 Vols. 1855.

Andrew definitely possesses, as sparing in his bawbees, as he is droll in his humour. He admits this on more than one occasion. At times, Andrew verges on the caricature of the Scot, dear to music-hall artists from Sir Harry Lauder down, but Galt never intended the portrait of the Scot to be so simplified and stereotyped, as it afterwards was. There is also a fearless directness about Andrew, that is highly individual: he makes those with whom he comes into contact, search their very hearts and consciences; and he never gains at the expense of others. Consequently he attracts many friends and is a lovable character, when many of his absurdities are discounted, unlike the music-hall conception of the Scot, which is entirely unloveable and grotesque.

By virtue of these gifts of nature, to which reference has been made, Andrew succeeds in reconciling the Earl and Countess of Sandyford, after some very tiresome twists and turns of plot, thus gaining their gratitude, as well as that of the Countess's father, the Marquis of Avonside, an English equivalent of Lord Rossville in Susan Ferrier's novel "The Inheritance", The Marquis gives Galt an opportunity of drawing the Party Man attached to the Government automatically, because his father and grandfather were before him; chill and pompous as Lord Rossville, his portrait is not nearly so amusing, nor so highly finished as that of the Scottish peer.

Andrew also entices the wan brother of Countess Sandyford, Riverside, to his proper place in the peerage, and wins from all, recognition of his prudence and intuition.

By this time, he has been made a partner of Vellum, becomes /

becomes M.P. and through the Marquis's desire to keep him attached to his party, a baronetcy is procured for him,

The only interesting episode of Andrew's London adventures, is his unexpected interview with George III at Windsor. Galt explains how the incident was suggested by his own chance meetings with that monarch at Windsor, "Something in his manner drew my attention, and from that interview, which lasted probably several minutes, I caught a durable resemblance of his peculiarities - I see him still."

Galt also tells us:-

"I know from good authority, that George the Fourth remarked in reading the description, it was 'by far the likeliest ¹⁾ portrait of his majesty he had ever seen'"

Andrew's natural kindliness is again displayed by his interference at a trial where some gipsies, who had sheltered him during a storm in a wood, are being tried for murder. Andrew manages to procure evidence of their innocence.

This romantic incident, according to the taste of the time, was the interpolation, of which Galt complained. Certainly such an episode is not a usual ingredient in a tale by Galt, but the sense of fitness and veracity return when Andrew goes back to Ayrshire.

The real romance as opposed to the pseudo-romance of the English adventures, is the home-coming of the lad-made-good, who has never deviated from his simple ways and who loves his humble friends and Ayrshire village, as much as when he set out to make his fortune, years before. That is true to Scottish /.

1) The Autobiography, Vol. II p. 275 by John Galt.

Scottish nature, as is the desire to benefit old friends.

What had sustained Wylie in his ambition? Galt surprisingly develops his love theme, hinted at in those delightful child idylls at the beginning of the novel, and now revealed again. "Without hereditary connections, without the advantages of education, and without the possession of any of that splendour of talent which is deemed so essential to success in the path of honourable distinction, he had acquired a degree of personal consequence that placed him on a level with Mary Cunningham; and for the first time, not only to any friend, but to himself also, did he avow the force of that attachment which, in the earnest pursuit of the means to indulge and to dignify, he had scarcely allowed himself to cherish, even while it constituted the actuating principle of his life."¹⁾

This disentangling of Wylie's own love affair, aided by his illustrious friends, takes the reader to Craiglands again. The delightful dominie and old Martha Docken are still to the fore, a haverel Jamie, and a doited servant lass, who can yet quote Horace, all add liveliness to the last chapters. The Laird and Miss Mizy with their ill-bred resentment and grudging acquiescence in Wylie's fame and fortune, afford Galt an opportunity of yet another study of country gentry.

"Remember the deevil!" cried this worthy member of the landed interest. "Isna what I say a God 's truth? The vera weavers in Glasgow and Paisley hae houses, I'm told, that the Craiglands here wouldna be a byre to. Can on gude come but vice /

1) Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol II. p. 225 by John Galt.

vice and immorality from sic upsetting in a Christian kingdom?"¹⁾

The laird, the last of his line, like many another is kindly enough, proud and sentimental, but uncouth, ignorant, slothful, and therefore doomed to make way before progress.

The description of his drawing-room is a real museum piece, with its twelve mezzotints of the seasons, including May with a piece of putty over her "smiles and her beauty",²⁾ the faded walls, dimity chairs, and second-hand harpsichord.

Good though that is, it is only part of the charm of this Ayrshire scene. The hero's return gives us a picture of graciousness and richness; we feel that the author is a man who loved what he wrote of, and who perhaps wistfully, saw the contrast between himself, a broken man, and the successful little apple-cheeked Andrew, with the merry eyes and unquenchable spirit.

"There are but two situations in which the adventurer returning home can duly appreciate the delightful influences of such an hour of holiness, and beauty, and rest: the one, when he is retreating from an unsuccessful contest with fortune, when baffled and mortified by the effects, either of his integrity or of his friendlessness, he abandons the struggle, and retires to his native shades as to the embraces of a parent, to be lulled by the sounds that were dear to his childhood, and, he fondly hopes, will appease his sorrows and soothe him asleep for ever; the other, when, like our hero, conscious of having achieved /

1) Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol II, p. 272. by John Galt.

2)" " " p. 269 " " "

achieved the object of his endeavours, he comes with an honest pride to enjoy that superiority over his early companions, which, after all the glosses that may be put upon the feeling, is really the only reward of an adventurous spirit. Both prompt to the same conduct; but the maimed, and the luckless, and the humiliated, shrink from the view, shivering with grief as they remember the thick and blushing promises of their spring, and contrast them with the sear and yellow leaf of their withered and fruitless autumn." ¹⁾

1) Sir Andrew Wylie, Vol. II. p. 241. by John Galt.

VI.

In a letter to Blackwood, 23rd June 1822, Galt writes that the novel in hand had "taken full possession of his fancy", and that he always knew that when he himself was interested, he would not fail in the effort. In addition, he asked Blackwood, for a bill for £300 or £400. "It is such an immense thing for me to have ease of mind that I hope you will oblige me in this. I am sure you will find it for our mutual advantage."

The "ease of mind" probably accounts for the richness of the novel "The Entail". Here, although, the three volumes, as in the case of Sir Andrew Wylie, demanded a certain padding, are Galt's qualities at their best; his inset sketches, developed to full-length portraits, in the characters of Claud Walkinshaw and the incorrigible Leddy Grippy; his power in retailing pathetic incident, deepened into a sustained tragic theme - the conflict between a man's desire and his better nature.

Again, Galt had hit upon a project; this time, he would chronicle the varying fortunes of a family for three generations. Both the manner and the matter of this tale are peculiarly Scottish. The 'Kittle' points of a genealogical table are dear to the Scots, with their veneration for an ancient line; secondly, the details of an entail and the going to law thereon, are familiar topics in Scottish life and literature. Already comment has been passed on this with reference to Miss Susan Ferrier's novel "The Inheritance".

However /

However, as S.R. Crockett writes in his introduction to the novel "The Laird of Grippy"¹⁾ is a happier and more fitting title than "The Entail" for the centre of interest, despite all the quarrels and reconciliations and law-suits, is indisputably the family itself. The old subject of the West County lairds had again drawn Galt, and the larger canvass in "The Entail" allowed him to work out the theme in epic manner. "The Entail" in its kind foreshadows Galsworthy's "Forsyte Saga" and many other modern novels and plays like Arnold Bennet's "Milestones", that are concerned with different generations of the same family.

"The Entail is founded on an anecdote related to me by the present Lord Provost of Glasgow."²⁾

The germ of the theme can be found in a sentence in "The Provost", where that worthy man, sagaciously commenting upon the country gentry, and not being impressed by their talents says - "We thought less and less of them, until, poor bodies, the bit prideful lairdies were just looked down upon by our gawsie big-bellied burgesses, not a few of whom had heritable bonds on their estates."³⁾

And so at the opening of The Entail, the reader finds that owing to the fatal speculations of his grandfather, the laird, in the Darien Scheme, Claud Walkinshaw, reft /

1) Introduction p. viii to "The Entail" by S.R. Crockett.

2) The Literary Life and Miscellanies Vol.I p.246 by John Galt.

3) The Provost - Chap. XXXIV - p.171 by John Galt.

reft of his rightful estate of Kittlestonheugh, becomes a penniless orphan, dependant on the care of a deformed old servant, the faithful and kindly Maudge Dobbie, a counterpart of Martha Dockin in Sir Andrew Wylie. But their respective charges repaid them in very different ways.

Early in his life, Claud showed his ruthlessness: Maudge had been a schoolmaster's daughter and had taught Claud to read and to write and to know ballads and chap-book tales (as Galt himself did) such as Chevy Chase, Babes in the Wood, Gil Morrice etc. But the orphan preferred "Whittington and his Cat", to the achievements of Sir Wm. Wallace, and at a tender age, imbibed sentiments in pride of race, and desires to win back his ancestral estate.

At eleven years of age, he was fitted out as a packman, and thus with a judicious selection of godly and humorous tracts, curtain-rings, sleeve-buttons, together with a compendious assortment of needles and pins, thimbles, stay-laces and garters, with a bunch of ballads and excellent new songs, Claud Walkinshaw espoused his fortune.¹⁾

Though "shy" and "gabby", he was "the dearest and gairest pedlar" in all the west country, and soon, extended his beat to the Borders, leaving Maudge bed-ridden in her garret in the Saltmarket, neglected but uncomplaining, until her death.

1) The Entail - p. 15 by John Galt.

Twenty years later, "he set himself up as a cloth-merchant in a shop under the piazza of a house which occupied part of the ground where the Exchange now stands."¹⁾

In a few years' time, "his savings and gatherings enabled him to purchase the farm of Grippy, a part of the patrimony of his family.

The feelings of the mariner returning home, when he again beholds the rising hills of his native land, and the joys and fears of the father's bosom, when after a long absence, he approaches the abode of his children, are tame and calm compared to the deep and greedy satisfaction with which the persevering pedlar received the earth and stone that gave him infertilement of that cold and sterile portion of his forefather's estate."²⁾

Already, Galt has given us a hint of the strange nature of his hero. A grim, inflexible determination to win back Kittlestonheugh, to let nothing stand in his way, to choke down all natural feelings of pity or tenderness, make and break this man. His conflicts, his obsession, his dark passions and momentary gleams of humanity quickly stifled, his selfless sacrifice to a barren pride in name, again remind us how closely in some respects these Scottish tales are akin to the Russian novel.

The realism of "The Entail" is so commanding that having /

1) The Entail - p.18 by John Galt.

2) The Entail - p.18 by John Galt.

having once accepted Claud Walkinshaw as possible, we regard the other Scots peasants, actuated by cunning or brutish instincts as equally natural. The whole level of human nature has sunk: the most able character Claud, approaches a spiritual abyss, in contrast to which the agony of his idiot son seems almost alleviation, for in Watty's case at least, the emotion of pity is uppermost in the reader.

This world of small lairds and uncouth peasants is very like that in which Fyodor and Dimitri Karamazov lusted and hated. There is none of the cool, serene atmosphere of the Annals of the Parish here; but something new and compelling, a close psychological study of insensate pride of caste - even although this caste was becoming extinct and possessed no qualities that could claim for it any right to continue: involved in this family pride is greed for gear, that will enhance family dignity, and every sinew is bent to the acquisition of this. Claud is not only fighting against his own nature, but as we shall see, turning against nature itself.

After this first portion, the Grippy Farm had been obtained, Claud weighing the matter very coolly, decided to marry an heiress. Already he had had overtures made to him by Malachi Hypel, Laird of Plealands, on behalf of his daughter, Miss Girzy Hypel. Galt hints that he flew /

flew at higher prey, first of all, but being unsuccessful, decided to put up with Plealand's settlement.

Galt gives us the sordid haggling over the marriage settlements:-

1)

"The wife maun hae something to put in the pot as well as the man; and although Miss Girzy mayna be a' thegither objectionable, yet it would still be a pleasant thing baith to hersel' and the man that gets her, an' ye would just gie a bit inkling o' what she'll hae."

"Isna she my only dochter? That's a proof and test that she'll get a'. Naebody needs to be teld mair."

"Verra true, laird" rejoined the suitor; "but the ledly's life's in her lip, and if onything were happening to her, ye're a hale man, and wha kens what would be the upshot o' a second marriage?"

"That's looking far ben", replied the laird; and he presently added more briskly, "my wife to be sure, is a frail woman, but she's no the gear that 'ill traike."

"In this delicate and considerate way the overture to a purpose of marriage was opened; and, not to dwell on particulars, it is sufficient to say, that in the course of little more than a month thereafter, Miss Girzy was translated into the Lady of Grippy; and in due season presented her husband with a son and heir, who was baptized by the name of Charles."

1) The Entail p.36 by John Galt

The birth of Charles opened up new difficulties; resolving "to anticipate the indiscretion of his heir, he executed a deed of entail on Charles",¹⁾ while Plealands refused to do anything for Charles unless his father permitted him to adopt the name of Hypel. This was emphatically refused by Walkinshaw. However, three years afterwards, a second son Walter was born on whom the lands of Plealands were entailed, on condition as his grandfather intended, that he should assume the name of Hypel.

By the united efforts of his wife and himself, Grippy soon became one of the wealthiest men of that age in Glasgow.

The next important incident in the family was the death of Malachi Hypel. This occasioned a great and jocose funeral, "according to the fashion of the age", such as those described by Miss Ferrier in Marriage and in Destiny, and afforded Galt the opportunity of introducing incidents of grim humour, for as well as "seed cake and wine, tobacco-pipes and shortbread, there was brandy unadulterated by any immersion of the gauger's rod."²⁾

"The betheral and his assistant then drew out the planks, and the sudden jerk of the coffin, when they were removed, gave such a tug to those who had hold of the cords that it pulled them down, head foremost, into the grave after /

1) The Entail - p. 48 by John Galt.

2) The Entail - p. 52 by John Galt.

after it. Fortunately however, none were buried but the body; for by dint of the best assistance available on the spot, the living were raised, and thereby enabled to return to their respective homes, all as jocose and as happy as possible.¹⁾

Such shameful conduct did often take place in old Scotland, and rightly merited old Micah Balquidder's reforms and retrenchments of funeral entertainment,²⁾ recorded in the Annals.

On examining the laird's papers after the funeral, the Lawyer Mr. Keblevin "the father of the celebrated town-clerk of Gudetown discovered that, although Walter, Claud's second son, was admitted as heir to the estate, he was under no legal obligation to assume his grandfather's name."³⁾ This was put into the hard-grained father's head, a most unnatural ambition, which was to cut Charles from his inheritance and settle it on Walter, that the Plealands and the Grippy together "would make a property as broad and good as the ancestral state of Kittlestonheugh."

The united voices of Mr. Omit the writer, Mr. Kilfuddy the evangelical preacher, and of Claud's no less formidable wife were raised against this monstrous proposal, but to the accomplishing of this, Claud from now on bent his /

1) The Entail - p. 52 by John Galt.

2) Annals of the Parish - Chapeer XLVI Vol.II p.44 by John Galt.

3) The Entail - p. 54 by John Galt.

his iron will. This theme is so sordid, that in a poorer writer, the central character could command neither interest nor respect, but in Galt's hands, Claud becomes a martyr to his own desire, almost a tragic hero.

As Leddy Grippy maintained with her coarse common sense:- "I canna comprehend, how it is that ye would mak step-bairns o' your ain blithesome childer on account o' a wheen auld dead patriarchs that hae been rotten, for aught I ken to the contrary, since before Abraham begat Isaac."¹⁾

As with Gideon Sarn in Mary Webb's "Precious Bane", the greed of land made Claud deliberately inhuman in his relations with others, and though for a time, he throve, in the end he reaped nothing but bitterness. Nothing revealed this cruelty more than the fact that he realized only too clearly what a fine young fellow was his dispossessed eldest son Charles, and what a weak "haverel" was his second son Wattie.

The latter is introduced to the reader on the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Kilfuddy to console Leddy Grippy in the loss of her father. Every stroke is pitiless but telling:- "at this juncture Watty, the heir to the deceased, came rumbling into the room, crying - 'Mither, mither' Meg Draiks winna gie me a bit of auld daddy's burial bread though ye brought over three farls wi' the sweeties on't /

1) The Entail - Vol. I p.46 by John Galt.

on't and twa whangs as big as peats o' the fine sugar
 cake'.¹⁾"

On the other hand, Charles was a delightful young man, who had come under the mellowing influence of his grandmother, Plealand's widow, a thoughtful woman, who after her coarse husband's death, developed into a happy old lady, who laid great stress on the natural affections, as a result of having been deprived of them on her own marriage. Under this tuition, it was not long before Charles fell in love with Bell Fatherlans, sister of a college friend. To begin with, Claud approved of the match, but when the gentle Bell's father was ruined in the Mississippian project of the Ayr bank, Claud persuaded his son to wait for a year before marrying Bell, for, by that time, he hoped that his love would 'cool'. To begin with the young couple agreed, and Bell became assistant to Miss Mally Trimmings,²⁾ "a celebrated mantle-maker of that time."

However, as old Mrs. Hypel later said to Claud:- "a meek and gentle creature like her wasna fit to bide the flyte and flights o' the Glasgow leddies",³⁾ and Charles unable to bear seeing his Isabella suffer, and her beauty fade, married her. Old Mrs. Hypel was sent to break the news to Claud, who at first took it reasonably and calmly, and promised to help the young couple. But when the old lady departed, Claud's feelings underwent a change and were further irritated

1) The Entail - p.61 by John Galt.

2) The Entail - p.80 by John Galt.

3) The Entail - p.94 by John Galt.

by Leddy Grippy's untimely remonstrances. The whole dialogue of this scene is masterly. The old temptation is stirring in Claud's mind to disinherit Charles, for whom he had planned a match with a neighbouring heiress, Betty Bodle.

Later on, as he is thinking aloud and persuading himself that he has been abused, and is only going to extract just retribution, he says - ¹⁾ "I never thought he would hae used me in this way. I'm sure I was aye indulgent to him."

"Overly sae" interrupted Mrs. Walkinshaw, "and often I told you that he would gie you a het heart for't and noo ye see my words hae come to pass."

Claud scowled at her with a look of the fiercest aversion, for at that moment, the better feelings of his nature yearned towards Charles, and almost overcame the sordid avidity with which he had resolved to cut him off from his birthright, and to entail the estate of Grippy with the Plealands on Walter."

The whole scene is frightful; the insensitive Leddy and her oafish favourite, the imbecile Wattie; and dominating them, Claud, in the grip of his mighty temptation, seem to us sub-human.

Claud's conversation with Mr. Keelevin, the Writer, with /

1) The Entail - p.98 by John Galt.

with whom he decides to entrust his affairs, is also managed with telling effect. Having ascertained from the Writer that the deed of entail made after Charles was born would never stand, Claud disclosed his intention of

1) entailing the Grippy on Walter and his heirs male "Syne on Geordie and his heirs-male; and failing them ye may gang back to please yoursel' to the heirs-male o' Charlie, and failing them to Meg's heirs-general."

"Mr. Walkinshaw", said the honest writer after a pause of about a minute, "there's no christianity in this."

'But there may be law, I hope'. 'I think, Mr. Walkinshaw, my good and worthy friend, that you should reflect well on this matter, for it is a thing by-ordinar to do.'

'But ye ken, Mr. Kulwin, when Watty dies, the Grippy and the Plealands will be a' ae heritage and willna that be a braw thing for my family?'

'But what for would ye cut off poor Charlie from his rightful inheritance?'

'Me cut him off from his inheritance! When my grandfather brake on account o' the Darien, then it was that he lost his inheritance. He'll get frae me a' that I inherited frae our forebears, and maybe mair; only, I'll no alloo he has any heritable right on me but what stands with my pleasure to gie him as an almons!'

After /

1) The Entail - p.105 by John Galt.

After this terse and dramatic conversation Mr. Keelvin felt that there was no resisting Claud, who commanded a paper to be made out for Watty, "by the whilk he's to 'gree that the Plewlands gang the same gait, by entail, as the Grippy."¹⁾

A clear and "tight" entail was accordingly made.

Not long after this, Claud got his two sons to sign the paper as witnesses, ignorant of the contents, and "the disinheritance was made complete."²⁾

A hint from the Leddy Grippy that "noo that Charlie's by hand and awa, as the ballad Woo't and Married and a' says, couldna ye persuade our Watty to mak up to Betty, and sae get her gear saved to us yet?"³⁾

caused Claud to visit "Kilmarkeekle, where Miss Bodle, the heiress, resided with her father."⁴⁾

Miss Bodle was a sturdy young Amazon, her father, an easy-going man, with a taste in snuffs. Having known Wattie from childhood, she had a kind of affection for him, so that Claud was able to let him know that the Kilmarkeekles agreed for their part to the marriage.

The scene in which Claud breaks this piece of news to /

1) The Entail - pp.107 - by John Galt. Ind. 8.

2) The Entail - p.136 by John Galt.

3) The Entail - pp.127-8 by John Galt.

4) The Entail - p.140 by John Galt.

to his son, and in which Wattie sets about his courting are brilliant.

1) "Watty", said the laird o' Grippy to his hopeful heir, calling him into the room after Kilmarkeckle had retired, "Watty, come ben and sit down; I want to hae some solid converse wi' thee. Dist t'ou hearken to what I'm saying? Kilmarkeckle has just been wi' me - hear'st ou' me? Deevil an' I saw the like o' thee - what's t'ou looking at? As I was saying, Kilmarkeckle has been here, and he was thinking that you and his dochter - "

"Weel", interrupted Watty, "if ever I saw the like o' that. There was a Jenny Langlegs bumming at the corner o' the window, when down came a spider wabster as big as a puddock, and claught it in his arms; and he's off and awa wi' her intil his nest; - I ne'er saw the like o't."

However Wattie overcomes his awkwardness sufficiently to come to some agreement with Kilmarkeckle's daughter, despite sundry slaps for kisses.

Before Watty's wedding was celebrated, Claud commanded Charles to bring a balance sheet across to Grippy, and upon reading it, he professed himself to be pleased with the profits shown therein, which he donated to Charles.

A lighter note enters the tale with the account of the celebration of Walter's wedding in the old Ayrshire style /

1) The Entail - p.151 by John Galt.

style, with the washing of the bride and bridegroom's feet on the night before, the pipes, procession, and solemnisation out of doors on the actual wedding day, and the great barn dance in the evening. After this came a description of the bedding of the couple, attended by all the jocose hilarity warranted on such occasions. This little touch of social history is in Galt's typical manner and with his usual veracity.

Almost at once after this, by an excambio with Mr. Auchincloss, (the gentleman who possessed "the two farms, which with the Grippy constituted the ancient estate of Kittlestonheugh"¹⁾)

Claud handed over the Plealands, along with some money, for the ancestral acres of his fathers.

Walter and Betty, after a huge outcry by the former, were settled in Divethill, one of the Kittlestonheugh farms.

From now on, it was noticeable that Claud's attitude to Charlie became more and more estranged. A canker was at work in Claud. How surely, as with a modern psychologist's skill, does Galt trace the 'disease to its source.

"Conscious that he had done him wrong, aware that the wrong would probably soon be discovered, and conscious, too /

1) The Entail - p.190 . John Galt.

too, that this behaviour was calculated to beget suspicion, he began to dislike to see Charles, and alternatively to feel, in every necessary interview, as if he was no longer treated by him with the same respect as formerly. Still, however, there was so much of the leaven of original virtue in the composition of his paternal affection and in the general frame of his character that this disagreeable feeling never took the decided nature of enmity. He did not hate because he had injured; he was only apprehensive of being upbraided for having betrayed hopes which he well knew his particular affection must have necessarily inspired")¹⁾

Meanwhile, Milrookit of Durdumwhamle married Meg, Claud's only daughter, his third wife, and the father was busily taken up with the settlements of this second barter-marriage.

Soon after this George the third and youngest son "was placed in the counting-house of one of the most eminent West Indian merchants at that period in Glasgow."

Galt then reminds us of the new stratum of Scottish society established by these merchants.

"This incident was in no other respect important in the history of the lairds of Grippy than as serving to open a career to George that would lead him into a higher class of acquaintance than his elder brothers; for it was about ✓

1) The Entail - p.197 by John Galt.

about this time that the general merchants of the royal city began to arrogate to themselves that aristocratic superiority over the shopkeepers which they have since established into an oligarchy as proud and sacred, in what respects the reciprocities of society, as the famous seigniories of Venice and Genoa."¹⁾

George was firm and persevering and avaricious, not actuated even by the family pride of old Claud. In fact, as Galt says, he was "a more vulgar character than the old pedlar."²⁾

To Charles and Isabella a son was born, who strained their income, though he gave them much happiness, but tragedy attended the birth of Wattie's daughter - "wee Betty Bodle" for her mother died. Claud felt this event almost as retribution; moreover, it changed the character of Wattie entirely; henceforth, he devoted himself to the charge of his "wee Betty Bodle", and adamantly refused to carry his wife's head to the Kirkyard according to the funeral rites of the day. Wattie had his own way of explaining death.

"Na, na, mother; Betty Bodle's my wife; yon clod in the black kist is but her auld bodice; and when she flang't off, she put on this bonny wee new cleiding o' clay",³⁾ said he, pointing to the baby.

Despite /

1) The Entail - p.202 by John Galt.

2) The Entail - p.203 by John Galt.

3) The Entail - p.216 by John Galt.

Despite much inward torture of mind, Claud soon began to plan feverishly for his estates, by arranging a marriage between Geordie and Miss Peggy Givan in the hope that "if he has a son, by course o' nature, it might be wised in time to marry Watty's dochter, and so keep the property frae ganging out o' the family."¹⁾

Meanwhile Mrs Milrookit gave birth to a son, Walkinshaw Milrookit, thus making the family pattern more intricate than before, for the leddy planned to marry him to "wee Betty Bodle", much to Claud's horror and torment.

Eventually Charles, now the father of two beautiful children, James and Mary, had because of his straitened circumstances, got into debt, and afraid of applying to his inscrutable father, went to consult Mr. Keelevin, who had to inform him at last of the entail. The news rendered Charles distraught, and produced a brain fever from which he shortly died. Claud, aghast at this terrible affliction, for he still loved Charles, had tried to persuade Wattie, to sign a paper, in which he agreed to make an aliment to Charles's family and to Mrs. Milrookit, but the idiot was strangely adamant.

"We a' hae frien's anew when we hae onything, and so I see in a' this flyting and fleeching; but ye'll flyte and ye'll fleech till puddocks grow chuckystanes before ye'll get /

1) The Entail - p.225 by John Galt.

get me to wrang my ain bairn, my bonny wee Betty Bodle, that hasna ane that cares for her but only my leafu' lane."¹⁾

Frustrated in this eleventh hour benevolence and further perplexed by the fact that Geordie's children turned out to be twin girls, Claud felt that providence had meted some great punishment towards him. There is a scene, terrible in its power, where Claud, recognising defeat, summons the Rev. Dr. Denholm and confesses to him, something of the sordid impulses that have governed his life until "the destroying angel slew my first-born."²⁾

"Ye shouldna entertain such desperate thoughts, but hope for better things: for it's a blithe thing for your precious soul to be at last sensible o' your own unworthiness."

"Ay, doctor; but alack for me! I was aye sensible o' that. I hae sinned wi' my een open; and I thought to mak up for't by a strict observance o' church ordinances."

"Deed, Mr. Walkinshaw, there are few shorter roads to the pit than through the kirk-door."³⁾

After much "warsling" in the manner of Erskine and the older divines, "the venerable pastor suddenly paused, for at /

1) The Entail - p.252 by John Galt.

2) The Entail - p.278 by John Galt.

3) Chap. XLIV. The Entail - p.275 by John Galt.

at that moment Claud laid aside his hat, and falling on his knees, clasped his hands together, and looking towards the skies, his long grey hair flowing over his back, he said with awful solemnity. 'Father, thy will be done! - in the devastation of my earthly heart, I accept the arles of thy service'.

He then rose with a serene countenance, as if his rigid features had undergone some benignant transformation.¹⁾

The atmosphere of this scene and much in the character of Claud, though a merchant first and foremost, recall the temper of the old Covenanters of the West Country, and so it is not surprising that at this moment, the godly conversation is interrupted by a "distant strain of wild and holy music rising from a hundred voices", and a band of Cameronians (not far off) come from Glasgow and the neighbouring villages were assembled "to commemorate in worship the persecutions which their fore-²⁾ :fathers had suffered there for righteousness' sake".

Not much time is left to Claud for repentance; however, after this he makes tenders of affection towards Charles's widow and children, who are at first suspicious, but succumb to their grandfather's kindness. From their innocent lips, however, he has to suffer cruel pain. The climax comes suddenly after the funeral, when he takes James and Mary to Glasgow cathedral.

"In /

1) The Entail - p. 279 by John Galt.
 2) " " p. 280 " " "

"In retiring from the church, the little boy drew him gently aside from the path to show his sister the spot where their father was laid; and the old man absorbed in his own reflections, was unconsciously on the point of stepping on the grave, when James checked him -

'It's papa - dinna tramp on him'. Aghast and recoiling, as if he had trodden upon an adder, he looked wildly around, and breathed quickly, and with great difficulty, but said nothing. In an instant his countenance underwent a remarkable change: his eyes became glittering and glassy, and his lips white. His whole frame shook, and appeared under the influence of some mortal agitation."¹⁾

When eventually the old man reached Grippy, he was struck with paralysis. In a last desperate effort to remedy some of the evils he had caused, he sent for Mr. Keelèvin. A brief and terrible scene is enacted.

²⁾ "At this juncture Leddy Grippy came rushing, half dressed, into the room, her dishevelled grey hair flying loosely over her shoulders, exclaiming - 'What's wrang noo? What new judgment has befallen us? Whatna fearfu' image is that, like a corpse out o' a tomb, that's making a' this rippet for the cheatrie instruments o' pen and /

1) The Entail - p.296 by John Galt.

2) The Entail - pp.299-300 by John Galt.

and ink, when a dying man is at his last gasp?'

'Mrs. Walkinshaw, for Heaven's sake be quiet! Your gudeman', replied Mr. Keelevin, opening the hood of his trotcosy, and throwing it back, taking off at the same time, his cocked hat, 'Your gudeman kens very well what I hae read to him. It's a provision for Mrs. Charles and her orphans'.

'But is there no likewise a provision in't for me? cried the led dy.

'Oh, Mrs. Walkinshaw, we'll speak o' that hereafter; but let us get this executed aff-hand', replied Mr. Keelevin, 'Ye see your gudeman kens what we're saying, and looks wistfully to get it done. I say, in the name of God, get me pen and ink'.

'Ye's get neither pen nor ink here, Mr. Keelevin, till my rights are cognost in a record o' sederunt and session'.

'Hush!' exclaimed the doctor. All was silent, and every eye turned on the patient, whose countenance was again hideously convulsed. A troubled groan struggled and heaved for a moment in his breast, and was followed by short quivering through his whole frame.

'It is all over!' said the doctor."

At this, the most arresting character passes out of the tale.

Wattie, for the time being, is master of the situation, and is still obdurate about doing anything for Charles's /

Charles's bairns to the detriment, as he thinks, of his "wee Betty Bodle." The latter, however, being a delicate child, dies, and Wattie transfers all his affection and care to Mary, Charles's daughter, treating her as his third Betty Bodle.

At this point of the tale, George begins his machinations, and has Walter summoned to appear in court as 'fatuus'. This scene shows Galt as a master of pathos; he can wring the heart if he will.

"In the course of two or three minutes the foreman returned a verdict of fatuity.

The poor laird shuddered, and looking at the sheriff, said, in an accent of simplicity that melted every heart, 'Am I found guilty? Oh! surely sir, ye'll no hang me, for I couldna help it' ".¹⁾

When understanding of the conviction once sank in, Watty pined away, lingering helplessly, for many years. Galt's study of idiots is always sure and life-like, and Wattie, his best, bears comparison with Davie Gellatly.

In *The Entail*, the lunacy is revealed with a poignancy that is almost Shakespearean, and curiously enough, it is to Elizabethan drama, that the reader would turn to find a counterpart for the one great character remaining, who redeems the second part of the novel from flatness, after the death of Claud, and fading out of Wattie. That is /

1) *The Entail* - Vol. II p.14 by John Galt.

is Leddy Grippy herself, who with her incorrigible behaviour, and bright garrulity is almost too terrifyingly life-like. No wonder that the Earl of Ripon said to Galt - "One thinks one knows her".¹⁾

Her broad Scots is full of a vivid abuse and her vocabulary, describing those who dared to anger her, recalls the 'flytings' in Dunbar. She is as triumphant and formidable almost as Juliet's Nurse, or the Merry Wives, or even the Wyf of Bath. She enjoys rude good health to the end with as much relish as she does her tricks of law against her own family.

The plot becomes rather tiresome when George reigns at Grippy. He tries to marry off his one remaining twin daughter, (the other had died) Robina to James Walkinshaw, whom he has employed in his counting-house. To neither of these young persons is the scheme acceptable; not to Robina who wants to marry her cousin Milrookit, nor to James who has set his heart on Ellen Frazer, niece of a certain Highland lady, a Mrs. Eadie, who possesses the second sight.

The ledy, to spite her own son, Geordie, who has made her take up residence, up a turnpike stair in Glasgow, manoeuvres an irregular marriage in her own house, between Robina and Milrookit. This effectively checks Geordie's plans /

1) The Literary Life Vol.I p.248 by John Galt.

plans, but the amazing laird adapts himself to circumstances and decides to try to oust his nephew in Ellen Frazer's favour, now that his own wife is dead. He perishes in a fearful storm off the coast of Caithness, at the very time when James and Ellen and their party, on a visit to the Frazers of Glengael, have gone on an excursion to Noss Head.

Very dishonourably, young Milrookit, in allegiance with his crooked lawyer friend Pitwinnoch, (for the worthy Mr. Keelevin has died) siezes hold of Kittlestonheugh, and will not pay Mrs. Charles Walkinshaw her annuity. He had reckoned without Leddy Grippy, however, who is ready to take him to law, if he will not pay her £1000 for his board and lodging, during the time Robina and he stayed with the ledly after their marriage. Out of this, Leddy Grippy determined to pay Mrs. Charles her annuity of £500 per annum.

1)

The triumph of Leddy Grippy is irresistible:-

"I maun gaur his mother write to him" said the ledly, "to tell him what a victory I hae gotten; for ye maun ken, Willy Keckle that I hae overcome principalities and powers in this controversy. Wha ever heard o' thousands o' pounds gotten for sax week's bed, board and washing, like mine? But it was a righteous judgment on the Nabal, Milrookit, whom I'll never speak to again in this world, and no in the

next either, I doot, unless he minds his manners."

The fact that Milrookit actually did pay such a huge sum for such a trifle, aroused suspicion in legal quarters and these suspicions came to the ledly's ears. As a result, Milrookit was forced to give up the property to the legal male-heir, according to the entail, who was, James Walkinshaw. Thus at last, was Charles's family reinstated in their rightful inheritance. The ledly took no small part of the praise to herself, though she was pleased on account of her favourite "oe", and comes to the conclusion -

"I doot few families hae had a grandmother for¹⁾ their ancestor like yours".

All her promises she ratified to her grandchildren in her will, in such a way that the reader is inclined to agree with her.

There is no doubt that "The Entail" then, is worth the contemporary notice it was given. Galt writes of it in his Literary Life:- "The work is considered among my best and has been honoured by the particular approbation of two distinguished men to whose judgment the bravest critic will defer. I was told by a friend that Sir Walter Scott thought so well of it as to have it read thrice - a tribute to its deservings that any author would be proud of; and the Earl of Blessington not only wrote to me that Lord Byron had /

1) The Entail - p.289 by John Galt.

had also read it three times but, when we afterwards met, reported his Lordship's opinion still more flatteringly.¹⁾"

As Blackwood's reviewer put it enthusiastically,²⁾ Galt had in *The Entail*, "the right sow by the ear".

Posterity, without flattering over duly, would be inclined to rate "*The Entail*" as worthy of a great national tradition of story-telling. It has not the shapeliness of *The Provost* and falls off in verve towards the end, but it is one of the most gripping and poignant analysis of character, produced by a Scottish writer. The novel much more resembles a continental theme, a novel of Balzac or of Dostoevsky, than it does an English novel, for it is a tale of that shadowy region much explored by the French and Russian writers, that region where sanity and the light of the spirit strive against idiocy, depravity, and the powers of darkness.

1) *The Literary Life and Miscellanies* - Vol.I p.247
by John Galt.

2) *Blackwood* Vol. XIII p.77 - Jan. 1823.

VII.

In the letter of the Earl of Blessington, (alluded to above) which mentions *The Entail*, there is also reference to the next work which was engaging its author's attention at this time - *Ringan Gilhaize*.

The passing reference in the earl's letter was an ominous augury from the reading public -

"I got a copy of *Ringan Gilhaize*, mais, entre nous je ne l'aime pas".

Galt was disappointed, curiously so, for he protested that he was "not actuated with a doting fondness¹⁾ for his literary offspring". However, *Ringan Gilhaize* was a special case: here Galt was deliberately attempting historical fiction, the province of *Waverley*. The theme was in his mind when he was writing *The Entail*, for as has just been mentioned, the character of Claud was remarkably like that of the Covenanters in some respects, and the *Leddy Grippy* actually refers to the name *Ringan Gilhaize*, her cousin the maltster, supposedly a descendant of the historical *Ringan*.

Some account has already been given of the novel, for the purpose of comparison with Hogg's *Brownie of Bodsbeck*. As has been said, *Ringan Gilhaize* suffers from length and from an attempt to telescope too much history into the scope of one novel. The only merits are in the presentation of strongly drawn characters, and in the tone and language employed throughout. Of the latter, Galt, writing to Lady Blessington, says:-

1) *The Literary Life and Miscellanies* p.248 by John Galt.

"Since this day week, when I sent off the letter to Lord Blessington, I have been all heart engaged in my new novel, "The Scottish Martyrs". The style I have chosen is that grave, cool and in some degree obsolete, but emphatic manner which was employed by the covenanting authors, a little like (but of a bolder character) the manner of that most pious and excellent minister, your Ladyship's friend, Balquhadder. I have got nearly the first volume finished, and Mrs. Galt says she likes it better than anything I have yet attempted."¹⁾

The narrative and the style recall the Book of Scots Worthies, wherein are recounted the lives of the martyrs from Mr. Patrick Hamilton onward; the "grave cool" but "emphatic manner lent itself to caricature, and long before Scott gave us the ravings of Kettledrummye and Poundtext in Old Mortality, Swift and other Augustan wits were satirising the jargon as in the burlesque "Memoirs of P.P. of this Parish".²⁾ Galt himself sometimes employs this Covenanting idiom jocosely, but in Ringan Gilhaize, he uses it with rare effect. It conveys a hint of elegy in its cadence. Miss Aberdein was evidently struck with this when she wrote:- "In it Scriptural imagery and cadence meet with the homely Scottish vocabulary to breed a striking kind of hybrid beauty - It ran off his pen with the /

1) The Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington, p.237.

2) Edinburgh Essays on Scots Literature - John Galt - by Dr. G. Kitchin, p.118

the ease of nature, and he took a poet's joy in it."¹⁾

"Hybrid" - the word is perhaps the cue to the peculiar effect of this language; it suggests an unnatural mixture - elevated piety and arrogant intolerance. There is a sickly sweetness too; the fanatic's joy in martyrdom; the voice of the zealot intoning a hymn. Unfortunately, its cadences are too singular to avoid easy imitation; on the lips of hypocrites, it becomes cant; on the lips of the devout it suggests a tone of Autumn, of the decaying leaf and the dying year, recalling the cause of the martyrs.

Thus the peculiar effect of the book is largely due to the Covenanting idiom of the younger Gilhaize, who aided by the recollections of his grandfather, Michael, the original Reformer, gives an account of the family's history from the time of the Reformation, during the regency of Mary of Guise, through the troublous conflicts of Mary, Queen of Scots and John Knox, as well as the period, when the Kirk quarrelled with the Kings, Charles II and James II until the final delivery of the godly by William of Orange. It is a period of 130 years of stirring incident - the hero is a family, the scene an epoch, and the plot the unruly wills and affections of sinful men - is manifested in three generations of persecutors and persecuted."²⁾

Historic panorama on this scale was an ambitious project /

1) John Galt p.141 by Jenny Aberdein.

2) Introduction by Wm. Roughead p. vii to Ringan Gilhaize.

project, what a Tolstoy might attempt, and it says much for Galt that he entered into the feelings of his imaginary characters in such a way, that contemporary readers were convinced that they were his own.

"The sentiments which it breathes are not mine, nor the austerity that it enforces, nor all the colour of the piety with which the enthusiasm of the hero is tinged."¹⁾

It is this convincing representation of the times which makes critics like Sir George Douglas claim for Galt in this respect, an insight even greater than that of Scott. "And into the spirit of the particular movement with which he deals, it must be acknowledged that Galt has penetrated further than Scott. For the true aim of the writer of a novel treating of these times in Scotland was obviously to disregard such a non-essential as sporadic insincerity, to penetrate the outer crust of dourness and intolerance and whilst maintaining the balance of perfect fairness, to compel the reader to sympathize with the best of the Covenanters, not only in their bitter resentment of cruel wrongs, but in their most earnestly cherished of loftiest ideals. And this which Scott did not care to do, Galt has accomplished in virtue of which achievement, his work is entitled to rank as the epic of the Scottish wars."²⁾

The epic note is struck in his fine descriptions of the most famous events of the times. There is through-out the /

1) The Literary Life and Miscellanies Vol.I p.250 by John Galt.

2) The Blackwood Group, Famous Scots Series, pp.72-73
Edinburgh 1897 - by Sir George Douglas.

the novel a wonderful sense of stirring events, of mass sensations, and the manipulation of crowds; perhaps the best of these is to be found in the Reformers' March¹⁾ to Perth. "On the day following, they accordingly all set forwards towards Perth - and they made a glorious army, mighty with the strength of their great ally the Lord of the hosts of heaven. No trumpet sounded in their march, nor was the courageous drum heard among them - nor the shouts of earthly soldiery - nor the neigh of the war-horse, nor the voice of any captain. But they sang hymns of triumph, and psalms of the great things that Jehovah had of old done for his people; and though no banner was seen there, nor sword on the thighs of men of might, nor spears in the grasp of warriors, nor crested helmet, nor aught of the panoply of battle, yet the eye of faith beheld more than all these, for the hills and heights of Scotland were to its dazzled vision covered that day with the mustered armies of the dreadful God:- the angels of his wrath in their burning chariots; the archangels of His omnipotence, calm in their armour of storms and flaming fires, and the Rider on the white horse, were all there."

Or there is the drama of Kirk o' Field:-

"He was for an instant astounded; but soon roused by the clangour of an alarm from the castle; and while a cry arose from /

1) Ringan Gilhaize Vol. I p.137 by John Galt.

from all the city, as if the last trumpet itself was sounding, he rushed into the street, where the inhabitants, as they had flown from their beds, were running in consternation like the sheeted dead startled from their graves. Drums beat to arms; - the bells rang; - some cried the wild cry of fire, and there was wailing and weeping, and many stood dumb with horror, and could give no answer to the universal question, - 'God of the heavens, what is this?' Presently a voice was heard crying 'The King, the King!' and all, as if moved by one spirit, replied, 'The King, the King!' Then for a moment there was a silence stiller than the midnight hour, and drum, nor bell, nor voice was heard, but a rushing of the multitude towards St. Mary's Port, which leads to the Kirk o' Field."¹⁾

Heroic and noble personages are met in the pages of Ringan Gilhaize, the martyr Mill at the stake, Knox in Edinburgh, the enchantress Mary, Queen of Scots, weeping after defeat at Carberry, the godly Mr. Renwick, the anti-christ Claverhouse. But as this period was a bitter and tragic one in the history of Scotland, any historical fiction, truly recapturing the atmosphere as does Galt's Ringan Gilhaize, will be tinged with the melancholy of the times. Francis Jeffrey, commenting on the novel in The Edinburgh Review finds this sadness intolerable.

1) Ringan Gilhaize p.233 by John Galt.

"The narrative is neither pleasing nor probable, and the calamities are too numerous, and too much alike; and the uniformity of the tone of actual suffering and dim religious hope, weighs like a load on the spirit of the reader."¹⁾

Apart from the narration of the sufferings of the Gilhaize household, the natural settings throughout the novel are poetically in keeping with the stern or sad human nature depicted therein. Several beautiful scenes could be cited as examples in keeping with the emotion of their context.

Young Michael Gilhaize, ruminating on the 2) papal iniquities of St. Andrews, that "Kingdom of darkness", as the Book of Scots Worthies has it, glimpses Kilwinning Abbey, and sees in its twisted masonry, symbols of rapacity:- "As my grandfather came in sight of Kilwinning, and beheld the Abbey with its lofty horned towers and spiky pinnacles, and the sands of Cunningham between it and the sea, it seemed to him as if a huge leviathan had come up from the depths of the ocean and was devouring the green inland having already consumed all the herbage of the wide waste that lay so bare and yellow /

1) The Edinburgh Review - Oct. 1823 - Francis Jeffrey's article on Ringan Gilhaize.

2) A brief Historical Account of the Lives, Characters, and Memorable Transactions of the most eminent Scots Worthies, p. 28.

yellow for many a mile, desert and lonely in the silent sunshine, and he ejaculated to himself, that the frugal soil of poor Scotland could ne'er have been designed to pasture such enormities.¹⁾

²⁾ The Covenanters are setting forth for the fatal Rullion Green:- "for the year was old in November, the corn was stacked, the leaf fallen, and nature in outcast nakedness, sad like the widows of the martyrs, forlorn on the hills; her head was bound with the cloud, and she mourned over the desolation that had sent sadness and silence into all her pleasant places."

Ringan Gilhaize goes to warn Mr. Swinton that the dragoons are coming to evict him from the manse:-

"The night was troubled and gusty. The moon was in her first quarter, and wading dim and low through the clouds on the Arran hills. Afar off, the bars of Ayr, in their roaring, boded a storm, and the stars were rushing through a swift and showery south-west tarry. The wind as it hissed over the stubble, sounded like the whisperings of desolation; and I was thrice startled in my walk by passing shapes and shadows, whereof I could not discern the form."³⁾

A /

1) Vol. I. p.103 - Ringan Gilhaize, by John Galt.

2) Vol.II. p. 57 - Ringan Gilhaize by John Galt.

3.) Vol. II.p. 16 - Ringan Gilhaize by John Galt.

A companion picture, the description of that dell of the Esk near Lasswade, the rendezvous of the Cameronian leaders with Mr. Renwick, furnished a motto for an essay in Blackwood's Magazine, entitled - "On the Sources of the Picturesque and Beautiful."¹⁾

In all those passages, above quoted, nature seems to be in harmony with the fortunes of the Gilhaize household and their friends, and these fortunes are mainly disastrous, until Ringan Gilhaize, at the end of the novel, revenges the wrongs, suffered by his house at the hands of the prelatic party, by killing Claverhouse at Killiecrankie. This is a fitting climax to the whole tale: a convincing dramatic close.

There are unforgettable scenes and descriptions in this book. No doubt Old Mortality is a better novel, but we read it for the immortal minors-Cuddie and Mause, or for the historical portraits of Claverhouse and Burley, but who would have Henry Morton for Ringan Gilhaize? Galt's hero speaks for himself and for his grandfather, that serene man, Michael Gilhaize. The reader sees Ringan from childhood, wrought on by stern influences around him, until he becomes a chosen instrument of revenge for the Covenant. His suffering and agony compel our sympathy: in contrast, Henry Morton, though a sensible and moderate young man has not the same hold on the imagination. Ringan's sincerity is painful: the peculiar atmosphere

1) Blackwood's Magazine, September 1823.

evoked by the recital of his misfortunes is due to the intensity of the Covenanting temperament and the language in which it is conveyed. Constant brooding over and cherishing of wrongs, constant recital of fierce Old Testamental Psalms like incantations, so wrought on these people that they expressed themselves continually in exalted tone. Between Covenanters and the prelat¹⁾ party, there could be no compromise; the "saints" were broken on the field of battle or in pursuit on lonely hill-sides: their wrongs were never forgotten. The outburst of sectarian churches later in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, may still be evidence of the rebellious independence of the Covenanters, but in the killing times, there was no way of protesting but by the sword.

Of the two volumes that compose Ringan Gilhaize, the first is less gloomy. Michael Gilhaize is a spirited lad, in whose adventures, Sir George Douglas, detects²⁾ a Stevenson flavour. From the start he felt himself to be "designed for great exploits", for, as so often in Galt's novels, in Sir Andrew Wylie in The Entail, and now in Ringan Gilhaize, the chief characters have premonitions³⁾ of the great part they are to play. In the whole of his journey there was indeed a very extraordinary manifestation /

1) Edinburgh Essays on Scots Literature - John Galt
by Dr. G. Kitchin p.118.

2) Introduction to Ringan Gilhaize - edited by Sir
George Douglas, London 1899.

3) Ringan Gilhaize - Vol.I. p.102

manifestation of a special providence, not only in the protection vouchsafed towards himself, but in the remarkable accidents and occurrences, by which he was enabled to enrich himself with the knowledge so precious at that time to those who were chosen to work the great work of the Gospel in Scotland."

Jeffrey denied that there was anything "new or remarkable", in the first part of Ringan Gilhaize, "but the picture of the Archbishop of St. Andrews' luxurious dalliance with his paramour, of the bitter penitence and tragical death of that fair victim of his seductions, both which are sketched with considerable power and effect."¹⁾

The description of the Archbishop of St. Andrews is vivacious enough.

- "and he used to depict him to me as a hale black-avised earl, of an o'ersea look, with a long dark beard inclining to grey; his abundant hair, flowing down from his cowl, was also clouded and streaked with the Kithings of the cranreuch of age - there was, however, a youthy and luscious twinkling in his eyes, that showed how little the passage of three and fifty years had cooled the rampant sensuality of his nature."²⁾

Towards the end of the first volume, the tale has reached the time of Charles I and the attempt of the Government /

1) Edinburgh Review, October 1823.

2) Ringan Gilhaize Vol.I p.24 - by John Galt.

Government to reintroduce the liturgy into Scottish worship. This gives Galt the opportunity of introducing different types of Covenanters into his tale. His study of the Covenanters being a sympathetic one, shows none of the satire that appears in Scott's treatment in *Old Mortality*, but it does differentiate between the shades of piety and fanaticism in the persons of Nahum Chapelrig, Ebenezer Muir and the others, who gather in the Gilhaize household to worship.

Undoubtedly, as was mentioned in Chapter V, Galt was championing the cause of the Covenanters, trying as he thought, to correct false impressions; but his study fell on the ears of an unheeding public, who had read and enjoyed the triumphant drumming of the fanatics in *Old Mortality*, and were not prepared to take the inflamed metaphor of the more zealous too seriously. However, Ringan himself, is no fanatic. With the army of Dalziel in sight, coming "like a stream along the foot of the Pentland hills" - "a Mr. Whamle, a minister, one of these, getting upon the top of the rock where I had sat the night before, began to preach of the mighty things that the Lord did for the children of Israel in the valley of Aijalon, where he not only threw down great stones from the heavens, but enabled Joshua to command the sun and moon to stand still, - which to any composed mind was melancholious to hear."¹⁾

The /

1) Ringan Gilhaize Vol.II p.63 - by John Galt.

The serious and elevated tone of some passages and the powerful descriptions of the Battles of Drumclog and Killiecrankie, mark the best features of the second part of the novel. Thus in the beautiful subdued setting in "the good and minute description of the perils and sufferings which beset the poor fugitive Covenanters in the days of their long and inhuman persecution,"¹⁾ in the character portraits throughout and in the portrayal of stirring incidents, the novel of Ringan Gilhaize has many merits. Yet, taken as a whole, the book somehow fails, the lack of proportion due to too many characters and too many incidents, as well as the unbearable and unrelieved misery throughout, prevent it from being a successful historical novel. However, because of its imaginative insight, it is a splendid failure.

It is easy to understand why it had no contemporary popularity, despite its great powers. People, to begin with, were becoming tired of the high-heroic, having had a succession of great historical romances for their literary fare since 1814, the advent of Waverley. The sardonic Irishman Maginn, one of the leaders of the more boisterous element in Blackwood's Magazine, cautioned the publisher. Ringan Gilhaize was not a paying concern; there had been too much writing both from Galt, and even from Scott. "It is probable that in a tradesman's point of /

1) Edinburgh Review - October 1823 - Article by Francis Jeffrey on Ringan Gilhaize.

of view you will lose little by not publishing Ringan Gilhaize, for Galt is writing too fast. Even Waverley himself is going too strong on us, and he is a leetle better trump than Galt. However, do not let anything ever so little harsh appear against it in Maga. I shall review it for you, if you like, praising it and extracting the greatest trash to be found in it as specimens to bear out my panegyric. G. will swallow it." ¹⁾

Though the manner and remark are jarring, they reveal contemporary opinion and give one explanation of the cold reception given to Ringan Gilhaize.

In an even more revealing remark almost as unpleasantly expressed, Lockhart voices the opinion of the time.

"Ringan Gilhaize arrived this morning, but I let the ladies have the Maidenhead of the Covenanter. The first pages very dull, and the style exquisitely out of taste." ²⁾

"Exquisitely out of taste" - the Covenanters had gone out of fashion. Galt had put himself in the wrong by championing them and therefore his pages would be found dull, however, they were written. Sir Walter Scott, Tory and Episcopalian, in Old Mortality, had shown that the bias was toward the Government side, and the character given /

1) Wm. Blackwood and His Sons - Vol.1 p.390
by Mrs. Oliphant.

2) Dr. Mitchell's Notebook No.36 N.L.S. MSS. Lockhart
to Blackwood.

given to Claverhouse had every advantage which the undoubted valour of the man might enhance. The Covenanters as has been mentioned before, were too free in their criticisms of authority, too insubordinate to be comfortable subjects on which to write a novel, in the chancy period after the Napoleonic war; their lack of compromise might put people in mind of the Jacobin spirit. What Galt persuaded himself was a worthy service in the cause of doing justice to a wrongly represented race, was regarded as ill-timed to say the least, and Galt himself, as a boring fellow.

Who will deny that there was snobbery in the attitude of Lockhart and his contemporary friends? And yet, the whole colouring of a character like Adam Blair, is due to the Covenanting background of Scottish life and literature.

It has often been said that the Scots are a wrong-resenting race, and the oppressive moral tone of Ringan Gilhaize, to which Jeffrey objected, probably arises from this. There is no satire, very little humour, and painful veracity displayed, but though there is justice in Jeffrey's remark, that Galt's fort is really in the "the quieter walks of humorous simplicity, intermixed with humble pathos" and "not in the lofty paths of enthusiasm or heroic emotion."¹⁾ Whoever has felt the

1) Edinburgh Review - October 1823 by Francis Jeffrey.
Article on Ringan Gilhaize.

strangely moving duty of Ringan Gilhaize with its background of bare moor and sunset can never regret that Galt was tempted from the usual quiet tenor of his way.

VIII.

Galt attempted two other historical fictions, Rothelan and The Spae Wife, which apart from some excellent characterisations, as James I in The Spae Wife, and the Jew, Adonijah in Rothelan, were not successful, before he returned to his former vein of depicting Scottish humours.

At the end of Sir Andrew Wylie, Galt indicates that he will deal more fully with a subject that constantly crops up in his novels, and one that Scott later refers to in the Chronicles of the Canongate - the gradual extinction of the old class of landed proprietor about the time of the Industrial Revolution.

Miss Mizy, sister of the Laird of Craiglands, one of this very class told us, that in sorting some old papers, she had made a great literary discovery: namely, a volume written by her brother, in his own handwriting, containing, as she assured us, 'a most full account of all manner of particularities anent the decay of the ancient families of the West Country'.¹⁾

The promised study is given to us in "The Last of the Lairds", the last also, in the series of Galt's best Scots parochial fictions.

In the different stages of its composition, we see the difficulties under which Galt laboured at this time (1826) as a man of affairs, and as a writer.

As /

1) Sir Andrew Wylie Vol.II p.386 by John Galt.

As a promoter of the Canada Company, which was formed and organized in 1824, Galt had many anxieties, for its charter was not granted until August 1826, and there were ominous signs, that this project might come to nothing in the interim. As a son, he had the anguish of watching his mother gradually succumb to paralysis from which she died in July 1826. As a writer, Galt, during this period was corresponding irritably with Blackwood, disagreeing with certain alterations which the publisher wanted to introduce in "The Last of the Lairds". On top of all this, Galt himself was physically ill and mentally full of disquiet.

One of the few bright notes supplied during this part of Galt's career, was by Dr. David Macbeth Moir, whose pen-name of Delta (Δ) was familiar to Blackwood's readers. Galt had made the acquaintance of this lover of the arts, when in 1823, he had removed from London to Eskgrove, near Musselburgh, and Moir was not only a literary mediator between Galt and Blackwood, but also a delightful and firm friend.

During the composition of the Last of the Lairds, Galt shows a bewildering caprice, now so dissatisfied with his own composition that he flings the MS. into the fire, now jealous over the slightest change suggested by Blackwood /

Blackwood, and at the next moment, assigning the novel to Moir to complete, as he thinks fit.

In the letter referred to, Galt thanks Moir for his good offices and makes some comment on the different characters appearing in the novel. He also gives his friend carte blanche to alter anything - "I give you full liberty to act, carve and change as you please; and I am sure whatever you do in either way will be improvements." "Perhaps a sentence or two may be wanting at the conclusion of the "Laird". If you think so,
 .1)
 supply it."

And then he went off to Canada!

The subject of "The Last of the Lairds" was not a happy one for this particular period of Galt's life. Fretted with cares as he was, in contemplating the drivelling of two idiots - the Laird, Malachi Mailings of Auld-biggings and the Laird's man Jock, Galt could not have found much solace; gone were that innocence and subtlety that are innate in his best characters. Undoubtedly the satire is harsher in this tale; the pathos of a Wattie Walkinshaw, or Meg Guffaw or of any of the other haverels introduced in Galt's novels, gives way to the fatuity and spite of Malachi Mailings. This laird is uncouth, imbecilic, and, on occasion, even cruel. His opponent, the Nabob, representing the new successful merchant class is a tiresome opportunist. /

1) Memoirs of Galt by David M. Moir prefixed to Blackwood's Standard Edition of "The Annals of the Parish" p.p. XXXIX-XL.

opportunist. Action is not the direct outcome of character as in *The Entail*, but is due to contrivance. There is none of the drama of conflict, as there was in the tale of Claud Walkinshaw. The Laird's property is marked down for the new-made man, and in the machinations of Malachi against the Nabob, and the Nabob against Malachi, the whole action of the plot is centred.

The humour throughout is often sheer farce as when Galt makes allusion to himself and to Blackwood. Yet there are good things here, as there are always in Galt's works. The mansion-house and garden of Auldbiggings are described with his usual zest for a picture accurately completed.

"The Mansion-house of Auldbiggings was a multi-form aggregate of corners, and gables, and chimneys. In one respect it resembled the masterpiece of Inigo Jones - Heriot's Work - at Athens: no two windows were alike, and several of them, from the first enactment of the duty on light, had been closed up, save where here and there a peering hole with a single pane equivocated with the statute and the tax-gatherer. The ^Apète-stones, or by whatever name the scalar ornaments of the gables may be known - those seeming stairs, collinear with the roof, peculiar to our national architecture - were frequented by numerous flocks of pigeons." ¹⁾

1) *The Last of the Lairds* p.2 by John Galt.

1) "The garden was suitable to the offices and the mansion. It was surrounded but not enclosed by an undressed hedge, which in more than fifty places offered tempting admission to the cows. The luxuriant grass walks were never mowed but just before haytime, and every stock of kail and cabbage stood in its garmentry of curled blades, like a new-made Glasgow bailie's wife on the first Sunday after Michaelmass, dressed for the kirk in the many plies of all her flounces. Clumps of apple-ringie, daisies and Dutch-admirals, marigolds and none-so-pretties, jonquils and gillyflowers, with here and there a peony, a bunch of gardener's-garters, a sunflower or an orange-lily, mingled their elegant perfumes and delicate flourishes along the borders. The fruit-trees were of old renown; none grew sweeter pears; and if the apples were not in co-rival estimation with the palate, they were yet no less celebrated for the rural beauty of their red cheeks. It is true that the cherries were dukes, but the plums were magnum-bonums."

There is something symbolic about this picture: the fragrance of the old-world garden almost compensates for the odour of the dunghill, the midden-hole and the body of the dead cat lying in the region of the offices of Auldbiggings. The glamour attached to the names of those ancient families almost saved their owners from the decay that their own sloth and incapacity induced.

Another description that is a triumph is the one of Mrs. Soorock's dining-room show-cupboard - as great a pride to the author as to her; so minutely is it particularized, with its first, second and third shelves, "scalloped in the edges, the whole painted of a bright green, and the edges of the shelves and the capitals of the pilasters were gaudily tricked and gelded," its punch-bowls, cordial bottles, "porcelain tower of teacups and saucers."¹⁾ Once more, the reader feels that the author had his eye trained on such a one, perhaps in boyhood days; it was a provincial Scot's housewife's joy.

As usual, whenever Galt is writing upon old Ayrshire curiosities, he writes with realism.

These are the best things in the book. Though there are here and there moments of fun, there is always a tinge of malice. The sweet serenity of the Annals is no more. Inertia, such as crept into the old stock of landed proprietors, kept them complacent and made of them a futile race. The utter inertia of Malachi again recalls the irresolution and vacillation of some of the figures in the Russian novels.

In writing "The Last of the Lairds", Galt says that "the object and purpose of his plan were to exhibit the actual manners which about twenty-five years ago did belong to a class of persons and their compeers in Scotland - the west of it - who are now extinct."²⁾

1) The Last of the Lairds p.223 - by John Galt.

2) Wm. Blackwood and His Sons - Vol.I p.459 - by Mrs.Oliphant.

Though we are again impressed by Galt's power as a psychologist in his analysis of the Laird's character, and feel that we are, as in *The Entail*, in a world of sub-humans, of pathological cases such as Balzac or Dostoievsky might treat, yet there is a lack of diversity, a severe limitation, of which Galt himself was aware, if the author only concerns himself with this one morbid character. "The station of the Laird in society, affords but few incident, and the selfish stupidity of the person is too offensive in itself to interest. To avoid disgusting is as much as one can hope for in delineating such a being. I know not if I make myself understood; but I have said enough to explain why there is so little of the Laird and Jock."¹⁾

Not only has Galt avoided "disgusting", he has actually elicited a certain sympathy for his chief character, hopelessly caught in the toils of Hugh Caption, the writer, and the Nabob.

2)

As for the other characters in the book, "My object in the work was to delineate a set of persons of his own rank, that such an obsolete character as a West Country Laird was likely about twenty-five years ago, to have had for acquaintance and neighbours: and I hope so far it will be found not altogether a failure."

"Not /

1) Memoir - by Moir p.XI. (Letter from Galt) - Introduction to the *Annals of the Parish* - Blackwood's Standard Edition.

2) Moir's Memoir p. XI.

Not altogether a failure is perhaps the best description of the novel; the character study of the old "doited" Malachi saves it from oblivion, as does that specimen of female garrulity, Mrs. Soorocks, a type of middle-class Scotswoman.

"The character of Mrs. Soorocks to which I attached no small importance, Mr. Blackwood expressed himself so offended with, that I could not help laughing at his energy on the occasion, for he spoke of her as if she had been an actual being; I wanted no better proof¹⁾ of having succeeded in my conception."

Galt is aware, however, that the other main character - the Nabob is a failure. Though, this type of wealthy, retired gentleman (never really retired for he is always dabbling in promising speculations) was a feature of Scots Society at the turn of the century, as such, the character though it has plenty of idiosyncrasy has none that is peculiarly Scottish.

"What you say of the Nabob is perhaps just; but then he is requisite. Some such vigorous personage was necessary to be opposed to the Laird", and we find few men of business with individuality enough to make a character of. At one time, I had an idea of introducing in his stead a successful Glasgow manufacturer, but the Oriental seemed to me more picturesque, and moreover, there is such /

1) Memoir - by Moir p.XI - Introduction to Annals of the Parish - Blackwood's Standard Edition.

such a person in R..... shire, so I could not resist the
¹⁾
 temptation."

Malachi's attitude to the world and to his own responsibilities, the attitude of one ill-adjusted to society, and resenting the misfortune which his own incapacities has induced, is nicely summed up by the Laird's man Jock (a panderer to his master's pride and prejudices) in answer to the author's question -

"Indeed, and what is he doing?"

"Doing? What should he be doing but sitting on his ain louping-on-stane glowring frae him?"

"And call ye that being busy John?"

"And is't no sae? Isna idleset the wark o' a gentleman - and what more would ye hae him to be doing in that way? What
²⁾
 could he do more?"

Actually the Laird is doing more - attempting to pay off his debts and clear his land by writing and selling his memoirs - "mine's to be a book o' soleedity, showing forth the wastrie of heritages by reason o' the ingrowth o' trade
³⁾
 and taxes."

Galt slyly suggests that a visit to Edinburgh has fired him with the desire to become an author. His composition /

1) Memoir p. XI D.M. Moir - Introduction to Annals of the Parish - Blackwood's Standard Edition.

2) The Last of the Lairds, p.33 by John Galt.

3) The last of the Lairds, p.39 by John Galt.

composition is haphazard, and "consisted of about half-a-dozen small copybooks such as schoolboys are in the practice of using, two or three of them with marble coverings."¹⁾

The author suggests that an account of his parentage should by rights preface his autobiography, and elicits from him in conversation the anecdote about his father's death, to which Blackwood objected. The grim macabre humour is in the old Scottish style, several times referred to in this study. The old laird had been a member of the Langsyne Club, and at one of its sederunts had succumbed to apoplexy. One of his "drouthy neibours", Sparkinhouse, recounted the incident to Malachi, when "squeezin' the sides o' the gardevin."²⁾

³⁾ "Dry craigs, in the way of a peradventure, some short time after the sang, gi'ed a glimpse out o'er the table at my father, and seeing something no canny in his glower, said to the preses, "Pluncorkie," /

1) The Last of the Lairds p.16 - by John Galt.

2) The Last of the Lairds p.20 - by John Galt.

3) The Last of the Lairds p.21 - by John Galt.

"Pluncorkie," said he, "I'm thinking Auldbiggings is looking unco gash."

"Gash!" quo' Pluncorkie, "nae wonder; he's been dead this half-hour; his e'en flew up and his lips fell down, just as Dramkeg was singing the verse about the courting at the fireside; - and was I to spoil a gude sang for the likes o' him? -!"

Galt also tells us that he had intended "The Last of the Lairds" to belong to that series of fictions of manners of which "The Annals of the Parish" is the beginning. Rightly, he fears that using narrative instead of autobiography, takes away "that appearance of truth of nature, which is in my opinion, the great charm of such works."¹⁾

The narrative in "The Last of the Lairds," is helped along by the intercession of the author and Mrs. Soorocks, as the helping neighbours, actuated by curiosity or good-nature. The Nabob, Mr. Rupees of Nawaubpore, having lent the Laird some money, and having procured the right to the wadsets of Auldbiggings, presses for the debt to be redeemed. By appealing to his vanity and prestige in the countryside, Mrs. Soorocks manages to persuade him not to press the old Laird, who, by the same lady's guile is cajoled into marrying the elder Miss Minnigaff of the Barenbraes. Miss Shoosie and Miss Girzy have an elder sister, Lady Chandos, on /

1) The Literary Life and Miscellanies - p.270 by John Galt.

on whom the estate of Barenbraes is entailed. To make the "vicious circle" complete, Lady Chandos' daughter marries Dr. Lounlans, whose mother had once jilted the Laird, so that, when she was a widow, he had in spite evicted her from her dwelling. Unfortunately, for Malachi, a little orphan, son of an old friend of the Nabob, miraculously rescued from a fire at sea, on his homeward journey from India, appears on the scene, as Mr. Rupees' ward and rightful claimant of half of that gentleman's estate, because Nawabpore was the father's trustee. Pressed because of this, the Nabob, prosecuted with ardour the claim which he had on the land of Auldbiggings, until the old Laird "like a bird hovering round its desolated nest and loath to take his leave, fairly finding himself driven to his wit's-end and unable longer to retain possession, abandoned the house, which for many a generation had been the pride and sanctuary of his ancestors and moved with his ledly and her sister to Edinburgh."¹⁾

That he could afford to do so, was due to the fact that he had sold his vote to a Government candidate who had bid to a fantastic figure with Mr. Rupees for the superiority of Auldbiggings. Though the generosity of Dr. and Mrs. Lounlans, the two sisters and the Laird were permitted to retain the use of the mansion of Barenbraes.

As Lockhart wrote to Blackwood, December 15th 1826 -

"I /

1) The Last of the Lairds - p.286 by John Galt.

"I fear he had been too hasty with the last half - it won't bear a second reading so well as the first would a twentieth." But we must bear in mind the circumstances of composition, and interpolations by Moir. Galt himself realised that this was not his best work.

"But although the work lacks essentially in being a story, it ought to have been more amusing than it is, and yet it is not deficient in that kind of caricature which is at once laughable and true."¹⁾

Caricature there certainly is, particularly in the scenes where Mrs. Soorocks is "as plain as she is pleasant."²⁾ This lady, indefatigably meddlesome, a second cousin to Miss Pratt and Leddy Grippy, tells us "I would die if I didna ken something about my neighbours,"³⁾ and is at her proudest during the marriage ceremony of the Laird. An extract from this scene will suffice to show how sharp Galt's pen had become.

"No, but, Laird, just hear me a moment," said Mrs. Soorocks, lifting up nuts from a china plate on the side-table; "seeing is believing all the world over. Now, ye see, if I was to take a pair of these nuts, and say to myself, 'There's me and there's Mr. Roopy,' as I throwed them into the fire, ye wad see the ane fizz and flee away frae the ither up the lum, or out at the ribs like a bomb-shell; for, ye observe, it's /

1) The Literary Life - Vol. I - p.271 by John Galt.

2) The Last of the Lairds - p.202 by John Galt.

3) The last of the Lairds - p.169 by John Galt.

it's no in the course o' nature that the like o' him and me should ever come thegither; but on the contrair - sae deeply am I impressed in the truth o' what I am saying - I could wager my life maistly that were I to put in these twa, and say as I do noo, 'There goes you Laird, and there goes Miss Shoosie -"', all the time Mrs. Soorocks was suiting the action to the word - "ye wad observe them burn to a white aizle lovingly together."¹⁾

After such persuasion, and many tumblers, the Laird succumbs, and much later that night - "The Bailie and myself, talking of matrimonial comforts, conveyed Miss Girzie, weeping, to her now solitary home."²⁾

Throughout the novel, there is the undercurrent of the servants' world - Jock the primitive, "a Solomon wi' a want",³⁾ Jenny Clatterpans, and Mrs. Soorocks' Leezie.

In contrast to the idiom of the genuine Scots worthies, the Nabob's jargon falls very flat. In his oriental museum of Nawanbpore, where "you beheld the cows tied to Corinthian pillars, looking out of Venetian windows,"⁴⁾ Mr. Rupees held his state -

"Warm weather, Doctor, this," said he; "never felt the heat more oppressive in Bengal, except a day or two during the hot winds, but even there you can keep it out by means of tatties, you know. Here, in Europe, we are still very far behind. Houses are very good for winter and wet weather, not /

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- 1) The Last of the Lairds - p.229 by John Galt.
 2) The Last of the Lairds - p.232 by John Galt.
 3) The Last of the Lairds - p.85 by John Galt.
 4) The Last of the Lairds - p.108 by John Galt.

not at all adapted for the summer climate; but when I have once got Nawaubpore in proper order, I'll make my own climate, as the Nawaub of Lucknow told Lord Wellesley - I'll have a subterranean parlour for the hot season. But hadn't you better take some sherbet or a glass of sangaree, after your walk? My anbdnar will cool it for you with a whole seer of saltpetre; for my icehouse has gone wrong, you know, by the mason leading the drain of the washhouse through it, like a d---d old fool as he was - I beg your pardon, Doctor."¹⁾

But this talk is tedious and when looking back over the tale, it is not the talk of the Scot-made-good, (for India haunted the mercantile imagination in these days) that one remembers, but rather the freshness of that morning, when Mr. Tansie, the village dominie expounds his philosophy "leaning over the sweetbriar with his arms resting on the sill of the window,"²⁾ while Mrs. Soorocks hurries across the fields on one of her neighbourly errands, and in the background the melancholy old Laird saunters along the tangled paths of his beloved Auldbiggings.

1) The Last of the Lairds - p.118 by John Galt.

2) The Last of the Lairds - p.96 by John Galt.

IX

What then is the value of John Galt's contribution to the Scottish literature of the time? The opinion of his contemporaries, as voiced half-chaffingly, half-seriously in Christopher North's "Noctes Ambrosianae," is definite on this point:-

Tickler: "Had rash John Galt now, instead of spinning out one hasty trio after another until 'panting puff toils after him in vain,' proceeded as he began, leisurely condensing in brief, compact tales, 'the harvest of a quiet eye,' who can doubt that by this time, the Ayrshire Legatees, the Annals of the Parish, and the Provost would have been considered, the merest prolusions and inceptive experiments of his fancy, instead of remaining after the lapse of ten years, the only ones among his novels, that can be regarded with any approach to satisfaction by those who¹⁾ estimate his capacity as it deserves?"

There is some justice in this observation, for we have seen that undue length and the introduction of extraneous matter, have spoiled Sir Andrew Wylie, and Rangan Gilhaize, and that for consistency, richness of tone and colour, those novels dealing purely with Scottish rural or burgh manners and with the Scottish countryside, are undoubtedly his best.

1) Blackwood's Mag. No. LVIII, Sept. 1831 - p.532.

"Tickler" might have included "The Entail" with the two above-mentioned, although there, the conception is slightly different, and a powerful dramatic plot, makes the tale more definitely of the novel form, than the other two mentioned.

With Galt's attempt at historical fiction as in Ringan Gilhaize, Tickler is ruthless:-

"His historical romances in the high vein are already dead, as if no Waverleys and Old Mortalities had ever called them into the mockery of life."¹⁾

This contemporary judgment, we have seen, is unfair to Ringan Gilhaize, and is largely due to the fact that the subject - the sufferings of the Covenanters - was out of fashion at the time. It is not so much the case that Galt fails to do what Scott so triumphantly carries off - the historical pageant in fiction with a liberal comic relief of realistic low-life characters interspersed - but that he was attempting something quite different - a sympathetic interpretation of a persecuted sect, whose characteristics persisted among the Scottish people for long after the killing-time.

Not only has Galt understood the character of the best Covenanters, but he has expressed their convictions in a language that is in harmony with the emotions he depicts

This is true, not only in the actual words and prayers of the afflicted, but in the whole tone of the book.
He /

1) Blackwood's Magazine, Nortes Ambrosianne, No. LVIII, Sept. 1831
p.532

He has a better ear for the cadences and undertones that are distinctively Scottish than has Sir Walter Scott, who merely introduced the vernacular here and there amid his Augustan English prose, to give a Scots flavour to certain passages. Language, tone and subject in Galt's novel are adapted in artistic unison. There is not only a Scottish accent, but a Scottish voice. Though he overweighs Ringan Gilhaize with character and incident, he has shown greater insight in his portrait of a Covenanter, than ever Scott chose to show.

Apart from a fine study of a Covenanter, Galt has given us something else which Scott did not attempt. Contemporaries noticed this. In the words of the Inverness Courier for May 10th, 1821:-

"We have long borne a slight grudge to 'the Great Unknown' for those prelatic limnings, as Micah might say, which he has given of the Scottish clergy (e.g. Mr. Blattergowl, Mr. Poundtext, Mr. Mucklewraith.)

The author of Waverley has indeed presented us with Mr. Morton, but he is one of those self-sufficing characters of perfect wisdom and unmingled goodness which are within the compass of any ordinary writer, and who, as they have no need of the reader's indulgence, obtain but a slight hold on his memory. It was therefore reserved for the present writer to bring us acquainted with a character of which the prototype

is /

is to be found in the memory or imagination of every native of Scotland."

It is a wide claim, but maybe it is justified. Lockhart and Scott made sport of the humours of the Presbyterian clergy, and in Lockhart's case, there was a touch of snobbery in his attitude to the earnest though sometimes uncouth race. Yet in Adam Blair, he delighted to portray what he felt were the tenets of John Knox, handed down through the years, to a more modern, but hardly less zealous environment.

But for a study of simplicity and real charm, we have to go to the innocent chronicler of the Annals. The naturalness, the truth of the picture, awakened response in a reading public that was certainly critical. The Inverness Courier goes on:-

"We may be better understood by saying that Micah Balwhidder is among our modern historians what Wilkie is among the Scottish painters; and we think that the Statistical Account of Scotland will never be complete, till the faithful annals of this homely and veracious Chronicler, are added to the appendix."¹⁾

Surely this is a triumph for realism, and it has stood the test of time, for the Annals of the Parish is still regarded as a classic, though other deserving works of John Galt are neglected.

Another /

1) The Inverness Courier, May 10th 1821.

Another feature of Scottish life not fully treated by Scott, is revealed in Galt's study of "The Provost." The attitude towards life of a growing middle-class and their problems as shown in local government, the life of the small Scots burgh, all turn our attention to the social changes that were coming over the Scottish countryside. New forces were at work; the working class was conscious of its unity and right to better conditions; wealthy merchants were ousting the small landed gentry from their feudal estates. Progress and mechanical improvement were in the air, with good and evil attendant. Scotland was coming out of the eighteenth century immensely alive and vigorous, more peaceful and thriving than she had ever been.

Now Scott has given us several excellent pictures of middle-class Scottish life, but they are intermittent in his novels, and appear as foils to the greater plot, dealing with some famous personage or event. He was not blind to the changes around, and viewed with a certain apprehension the lot of the workman, whether under laird¹⁾ or cotton manufacturer. Perhaps Scott felt that a benevolent laird, like himself, was likelier to interest himself in the welfare of his tenants than was the owner of a factory, bent on making things pay, and less interested in the human aspect.

Galt /

1) Journal of Sir Walter Scott, Vol. I, p.313, also Sir Walter Scott, Chapter XIV, by John Buchan.

Galt, a man of business himself, as we have seen, was enthusiastic over the improvements, but deplored the decay in country manners, and was occasionally disturbed by the pale, wan faces of the artisans. Of the two, there is no doubt that Scott was the more far-sighted, but the whole problem was never fully discussed by him in his fiction, although touched on in the opening chapters of "The Chronicles of the Canongate." Galt's sense of fun and understanding of the pretensions of his fellow-men made him the right man to give posterity a life-size canvass of a Baillie.

Nothing better reveals the difference of outlook between Scott and Galt than their attitude to historical pageantry as during the visit of George IV to Edinburgh. Scott as Tory and loyal supporter of the Royal House instigated pageants and parades and reviews. The creator of Provost Pawkie, Galt the realist, chuckling at this phantom of royal authority went home to write "The Steamboat" and "The Gathering in the West," or to write to Lady Blessington that -

"The best thing I have heard is the ladies who intend to be presented, practising the management of their trains, with table-cloths pinned to their tails."¹⁾

Of course Scott was right, Galt wrong, in not realising that royal authority must be made popular, and

1) The Literary Life and Correspondence of the Countess of Blessington - p.235 by R.R. Madden.

the subjects' imagination stimulated by spectacle. But Galt's attitude in this matter, partly explains the sly humour of Provost Parkie's circumspect loyalty.

Apart from these three superb national portraits of the Covenanter, the Minister and the Provost, as well as a host of minor characters betherals, heritors, haverels, beggars, servant-lasses, drummers and lairds, Galt gives us all the time an impression of a particular part of the Scottish countryside - Ayrshire; it is in the tongue spoken by his farmers, lairds and beggars, and in those inset landscapes, so economical in line. We are aware of the quiet backwaters, of villages nestling among cornfields, by brown burns, or in the shelter of fine woods, planted by progressive landlords; or of the sunset going over the moors and behind the Arran hills. The sea is there too, usually in savage mood, with the wrecks of ships lying scattered on the shore, but sometimes "lown," as the atmosphere of Dalmailing.

With all this rich store at his command why is Galt not even of greater stature as a writer? Had he limited himself as Jane Austen did, to a range over which he had full command, the perfection of some of his Scottish pictures, would have placed him in the first flight, but he was too enterprising, restless and impatient, wrote too much and too fast, to be content with the "inch square of ivory,"

Moreover, /

Moreover, he had a fateful idea about writing, which was really his undoing. The following passages from Galt's Literary Life (Vol. I, p.350) are most revealing:-

"I had kept no account of my essays, nor do I know where even many of my novels may be found"

-----"It is not however, altogether owing to this indifference that I have been led apparently to undervalue the mere literary character,"-----

"I was reading in the Lazaretto of Messina, the life of Alfieri, and was prodigiously affected by the incidental observation, where he remarks, that the test of greatness is the magnitude of man's undertakings to benefit the world. The truth descended on me like inspiration. I rose agitated from my seat, and could think of nothing all the remainder of the day, but of corroborative circumstances. Since that time I have ever held literature to be a secondary pursuit - the means of recording what has been done."

The serious limitation which this so-called "inspiration arising from a trite enough remark, brought about, materially impaired Galt's talents as a novelist. Literature was a "secondary pursuit!" "The creation of books did not appear to me to fall within the scope of his sublime idea of greatness."²

Therefore, to Galt, his novels were mere "clishmaclavers!" and /

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- 1) The Literary Life and Miscellanies - pp.350-1 by John Galt.
 - 2) The Literary Life and Miscellanies - p.352 by John Galt.

and he affirmed - "I shall not be justly dealt with, if
I am considered merely as a literary man."¹⁾

No one would doubt Galt's genius as an administrator, but no one who has read "The Annals of the Parish", "The Provost" and "The Entail", would not lament that he had such little respect for the vocation of letters and for his own talents therein. Over the Scottish novelists hitherto reviewed, he stands head and shoulders, but he would have been of even greater stature had he seriously cared.

1) The Literary Life and Miscellanies - p.357 by John Galt.

CHAPTER VII - DAVID MACBETH MOIR.

- I Galt's many imitators: David Macbeth Moir - the first acknowledged follower in his novel - "The Life of Mansie Wauch - Tailor in Dalkeith". Serial publication in Blackwood's Magazine. Galt supposed to be the author; Mansie Wauch listed as one of Galt's novels in obituary in Gentleman's Magazine.
- II Decay of Scots parochial fiction begun. Gradual anglicization of vernacular noticeable in different stages of Mansie Wauch. Moir no phonetician. Use of diminutive ending. Sentimental treatment of Scots character, enhanced by sound of the vernacular.
- III Cruder incidents described: Mansie Wauch closer to the chap book world than Galt's novels. Humour arising from physical accidents. Narrative told from the peasant's or artisan's point of view. Incidents lend themselves to caricature. Smollettian quality of "The Resurrection Men" scene, and the "Killing-house" incident. Cruikshank's illustrations.
- IV Minute and insistent detail. Mansie's characteristics, particularly his nervousness and garrulity; typical of sedentary artisan.
- V Moir's digressions - plaintive and poetic - in keeping with his elegiac verse. Pathos and humour both exaggerated. Popularity at the time due to liveliness in anecdote, and sentimental pictures of Scottish rural life.

DAVID MACBETH MOIR (1798-1851)

The Life of Mansie Wauch.
Tailor in Dalkeith (1824-1828)

One of the great drawbacks of the 'masters' in literature is that they have their imitators, good and bad. Galt was too distinctive an author not to have his followers, but he was a dangerous model for inferior writers. How easily his pathos could degenerate into sentimentality, his humour into farce, was afterwards shown by the descent of parochial fiction into the kailyard school. On the other hand, his ability to tell a simple unadorned tale, to face the reality of a situation squarely, appeared in the works of another section of Scottish writers, as an exaggerated picture of the squalor of life.

The first acknowledged follower of Galt, who by virtue of one Scottish novel may be included among the Petty Scots Novelists, is his good friend David Macbeth Moir, who had assisted him in the composition of "The Last of the Lairds". Moir was a busy physician of Musselburgh and a prolific writer of poems, articles and stories, about four hundred of which appeared in the pages of Blackwood's Magazine, but the work, by which he is remembered, though not prized by its author, was his novel of "The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith". "Things to which I have bent the whole force of my mind, and which are worth remembering - if any things that I have done are /

are at all worth remembering - have attracted but a very doubtful share of applause from critics; whilst things dashed off like *Mansie Wauch*, as mere sportive freaks, and which for years and years I have hesitated to acknowledge, have been out of sight my most popular productions".¹⁾ Thus wrote Moir to his biographer, Thomas Aird, April 12th, 1845. The first instalments of *Mansie Wauch* appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, before they were assembled and published with additions in book-form in 1828. So much did this tale remind readers of Galt's style, that he was regarded as the author, and in the bibliography of Galt, printed at the end of his obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (July 1839- p. 93) *Mansie Wauch* is listed as one of his works. Certainly, Moir knew Galt's vein of writing well, and in *Mansie Wauch*, situation, method and language are strongly reminiscent of Galt.

II

The hero, *Mansie*, is a nervous little tailor; he tells his own story, and the setting is rural Dalkeith. However, even in Moir, the decay in Scots parochial had begun.

Most noticeable is the loss of Galt's sure handling of the vernacular. Miss Elizabeth H.A. Robson in her "Preparations for a Study of Metropolitan Scots of the First Half of the Nineteenth /

1) Quoted in Sir George Douglas's *Blackwood Group*, p. 94.

Nineteenth Century as exemplified in 'Mansie Wauch'," detects in seven different states of "Mansie Wauch" inconsistency and a progressive deterioration of the Scots vernacular. "It is at once apparent that 'Mansie' is another proof, if proof were needed of the tendency visible in so many writers of Scots from Burns and Sir Walter onwards, to anglicize their language progressively, until only so much Scots is left as is necessary to impart its flavour to their English. Dr. William Grant in his Introduction to the Scottish National Dictionary takes indeed "Mansie" as an outstanding example of this anglicization, dear to public, author and publisher alike".¹⁾

Dr. Moir, in his active life as a physician, came into contact with many different types of patient, was familiar with the dialect, understood it, but did not speak in the vernacular. "David Macbeth Moir is no phonetician;" continues Miss Robson, "he is not even consistent in his notation of Scots Dialect. In our 'Fragment' he writes father in one place, and faither in another. He never rose, as his fellow townsman, Robert Louis Stevenson rose, to a notation". (R.L.S. Poems, Bk. II In Scots)²⁾

Another fatal pointer in the Kailyard direction is Moir's recurring use of the diminutive ending, e.g. "poor wee chieldie".³⁾

Much /

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- 1) Preparations for a Study of Metropolitan Scots of the First Half of the Nineteenth Century as exemplified in 'Mansie Wauch' by D.M. Moir - by Eliz. Robson, London 1937, p. 5.
 - 2) "Preparation for a Study of Metropolitan Scots" by Miss E. Robson, p. 6.
 - 3) The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith by David M. Moir, pub. Wm. Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London,

Much strength is removed from Moir's anecdotes because of this falling off in the use of the dialect, and the very sound of his language suggest sentimentality rather than humour.

Perhaps the latter effect is due to the character which Moir gives to Mansie. The softness and timidity of the little tailor may have been commoner among the new sedentary workers and artisan class rising in Scotland in the opening years of the nineteenth century. Mansie's tenacious clinging to his wife Nanse, his small son Benjie, his shop and his rural Dalkeith, his fright when away from them, and his satisfaction in the cosy ingle neuk, are such as Galt would reserve for the weakened intellect of Wattie. His shrewd merchants, sly bailies, and even his effete lairds have none of this 'softness':

III

As for the actual narrative, the nature of the incidents described by Mansie strongly resemble those recounted in Galt's parochial fiction, and many seem, like Galt's to be anecdotes founded on actual incidents, such as a doctor might hear from some "crouse and canty" patient, but the whole tone is in a lower key than that of Galt's Scottish novels.

Mansie is first cousin to Leper the Tailor. Dalkeith is situated near the world of the chap-books, far removed from the/

the sharp exhilarating atmosphere of Gudetown. There, the humour lies in a sly phrase; in Mansie's town, humour is associated with bodily scaith, with bruised shins or black eyes. Deacon Paunch squashes a cat flat; Mansie and the onlookers stampede from the barn where the playactors are; Cursecowl, the ogre butcher, enraged at the misfit of his new killing-coat attacks Mansie and his apprentices. "It was now James Batter's time to come up in line; and though a douce man (being savage for the insulting way that Cursecowl had dared to use him) he dropped down like mad, with his knees on Cursecowl's breast - who was yelling, roaring and grinding his buck-teeth like a mad bull, kicking right and spurring left with fire and fury - and, taking his Kilmarnock off his head, thrust it, like a battering-ram, into Cursecowl's mouth, to hinder him from alarming the neighbourhood, and bringing the whole world about our ears. Such a stramash of tumbling, roaring, tearing, swearing, kicking, pushing, cuffing, rugging and riving about the floor!! I thought they would not have left one another with a shirt on; it seemed a combat even to the death. Cursecowl's breath was choked up within him like wind in an empty bladder, and when I got a gliskie of his face, from beneath James's cowl, it was growing as black as the crown of my hat. It feared me much that murder would be the upshot, the webs being all heeled over, both of broad-cloth, buckram, cassimir and Welsh flannel; and the paper shapings and wursted runds coiled about their throats and bodies like fiery serpents. At long and last, I thought it became me, being the head of the house /

house, to sound a parley, and bid them give the savage a mouthful of fresh air, to see if he had anything to say in his defence."¹⁾

The watchful eyes of the Kirk Session follow poor Mansie to and from the play and the authority of that awful body, vested in the person of the elder, Thomas Burlings, who cautions Mansie lest he be rebuked in public, is all-powerful. We are seeing life from the peasant's point of view, and not with the eyes of a Minister or a Provost. Yet the new spirit of the age shows itself in Mansie's flick of independence and rebellion at interference with his liberty.

Incidents typical of Galt's Scots novels, which also appear in Mansie are a Bailie's dinner, a duel, volunteering and a visit to a fair. There is no doubt however, that a vulgar note has crept into the humour, and on occasion, not even a smile could be evoked from readers accustomed to a saltier flavour in jest.

In most incidents, Mansie appears in a ludicrous light; the fun of the Volunteering scene is farcical - a Cruikshank piece. Indeed George Cruikshank is the illustrator of the Blackwood edition of Mansie Wauch, and the tale lends itself to the uproarious spirit of caricature. "Our pieces were cocked; and at the word - Fire! - off they went. It was an act of desperation to draw the tricker, and I had hardly well /

1) The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith, p. 174.

well shut my blinkers, when I got such a thump in the shoulder, as knocked me backwards head-over-heels on the grass. Before I came to my senses, I could have sworn I was in another world; but when I opened my eyes, there were the men at ease, holding their sides, laughing like to spleet them, and my gun lying on the ground, two or three ell before me".¹⁾

There is one good night described in the chapter called "The Resurrection Men" (Chapter X) where the fearful Mansie is tormented with bogle tales. There is a Smollettian quality in this anecdote, and later on, Dickens was to portray such half-human creatures as the callant that kept watch with Mansie in the graveyard guard-house, who had "a desperate dirty face, and long carrotty hair, tearing a speldrin with his teeth, which looked long and sharp enough and throwing the skin and lugs into the fire".²⁾

The atmosphere is sufficiently eerie. "It was in November; and the cold glimmering sun sank behind the Pentlands. The trees had been shorn of their frail leaves, and the misty night was closing fast in upon the dull and short day; but the candles glittered at the shop windows, and leery-light-the-lamps was brushing about with his ladder in his oxter, and bleezing flamboy sparking out behind him".³⁾

Inside, the session-house fire "bleezed brightly", and the callant and Mansie sat near the warmth, their blood curdling to the tales of the half-daft bethrel - auld Isaac, until the bottle of brisk brown stout cast its cork - "At that/

1) The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith, p. 79.

2) " " " p. 49.

3) " " " p. 49.

that moment a clap like thunder was heard - the candle was driven over - the sleeping laddie roared 'Help!' and 'Murder' and 'Thieves' and as the furr on which we were sitting played flee backwards, cripple Isaac bellowed out, 'I'm dead! - I'm killed - shot through the head! - Oh! oh! oh!'

Surely I had fainted away; for when I came to myself I found my red comforter loosed, my face all wet - Isaac rubbing down his waistcoat with his sleeve - the laddie swigging ale out of a bicker - and the brisk brown stout, which, by casting its cork, had caused all the alarm, whizz - whizz - whizzing in the chimley lug¹⁾".

The subject of this incident - recalling the terror inspired by the body-snatchers - might naturally attract the attention of a doctor. A modern treatment of this theme is given by James Bridie, also a doctor (Dr. Mavor) in his play of "The Anatomist". In this incident, Moir is working in a gruesome Scots tradition.

One or two other incidents are gruesome. As a child, Mansie is locked in a killing-house by the beastly butcher Cursecowl. "I thought I would have gone out of my wits, when I heard the door locked upon me, and looked round me in such an unearthly place. It had only one sparrow window, and there was a garden behind, but how was I to get out? I danced round and round about, stamping my heels on the floor, and rubbing my begritten face with my coat sleeve. To make matters /

1) The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith, p. 54.

matters worse, it was wearing to the darkening. The floor was all covered with lappered blood, and sheep and calf skins. The calves and the sheep themselves, with their cuttit throats, and glazed een, and ghastly gurning faces, were hanging about on pins, heels uppermost. Losh me! I thought on Bluebeard and his wives in the bloody chamber!

And all the time it was growing darker and darker, and more dreary; and all was as quiet as death itself. It looked, by all the world, like a grave and me buried alive within it; till the rottens came out of their holes to lick the blood and whisked about like wee evil spirits".¹⁾

Again the coarse-grained world of the chap-books is very near.

IV

Mansie's characteristics are hammered home to us; and he appears to be a very human little man. He is nervous of dark nights, and eerie tales, but on the awful night of the fire, tormented by the thought of losing his gear, he accomplishes prodigies of valour; "rescuing the precious life of a woman of eighty, that had been four long years bedridden".²⁾

One "blasty" night in March, Mansie discovers a poor French prisoner lying in his coal-house and is torn between patriotism and pity for a fellow-creature. "On Penicuik being /

1) The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith, p. 23.

2) " " " " p. 131.

being mentioned, we heard the foreign creature in the coal-house groaning out, 'och', and 'ochone' and 'parbleu', and 'Mysie Rabble', - that I fancy was his sweetheart at home, some bit French quean, that wondered he was never like to come from the wars and marry her. I thought on this, for his voice was mournful, though I could not understand the words; and kennin' he was a stranger in a far land my bowels yearned within me with compassion towards him.¹⁾"

Mansie's garrulity and quick eye in detecting texture and quality of clothes are also in keeping with the character of sedentary worker and Moir as a doctor must have come in touch with many.

V

Although a love of fun and keen sense of humour distinguished Moir as a man, a plaintive sadness maybe a reflection of domestic tragedy (he lost three young children in swift succession) or of the suffering witnessed in his career as physician as during the cholera outbursts, caused him to write many elegies. Two incidents in Mansie Wauch afford indulgence in this sad mood, one a digression, describes the contents found in a Welshman's coat sold to Mansie, the pathetic /

1) The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith, p. 197.

pathetic verses and childhood recollections of a sentimental young man; the other, connected with the main plot, refers to the pathetic death of Mungo Glen, Mungo's little apprentice from the Lammermuirs.

Although droll Mansie rouses our interest and sympathy by his homeliness and clowning, we feel that every effect is surcharged, every touch of humour or pathos exaggerated. Incident is so minutely described that it becomes oppressive, and the bland complacent laughter of a Provost Pawkie is replaced "with endless ¹⁾cauchinnation by the tailor-humourist".

Galt's discriminating taste that helps him to etch character so incisively is replaced in Moir's writings by the frank animal gusto of his portrayal of a more primitive race of Scots peasants than ever appear in the annals of Dalmailing or Gudetown.

Yet it is not difficult to understand why Mansie Wauch was so popular and is still read to-day: there is a liveliness about the whole tale, and touches of description about Dalkeith and its surroundings that are very pleasant. Quite a number of these little landscape sketches belong to the twilight, a time in keeping with the sentimental mood.

"I may confess, without thinking shame, that I was glad when I found our nebs turned homeward; and when we got over the turn of the brae at the old quarry-holes, to see the blue smoke of our own Dalkeith hanging like a thin cloud over the tops of the green trees, through which I perceived the glittering /

1) A survey of English Literature 1780-1830 by Oliver Elton, Vol. II, p. 263.

glittering weathercock on the old kirk steeple"¹⁾.

Moir had appreciated the subdued tones of the Lothian landscape.

"As I was thus musing, the bright red sun of summer sank down behind the top of the Pentland Hills, and all looked bluish, dowie, and dreary, as if the heart of the world had been seized with a sudden dwalm, and the face of nature had at once withered from blooming youth into the hoariness of old age. Now and then the birds gave a bit chitter; and whiles a cow moved from the fields; and the dew was falling like the little tears of the fairies out of the blue lift, where the gloaming star soon began to glow and glitter bonnily"²⁾.

We have to remember that it is Mansie who is describing a familiar and beloved country side, but even the familiar is terrifying to a nervous person like the little tailor, when shadows fall.

"We heard the water, far down below, roaring and rushing over the rocks, and thro' among the Duke's woods - big, thick, black trees, that threw their branches, like giant's arms, half across the Esk, making all below as gloomy as midnight; while over the tops of them, high, high aboon, the bonnie wee starries were twink-twinkling far amid the blue"³⁾.

Apart from those little pastoral scenes, there are one or two character-sketches of Scots worthies; we might leave /

1) The Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Daleith, p. 90.

2) " " " p. 91.

3) " " " p. 95.

leave Mansie Wauch with a delightful description of that old rustic patriarch, his grandfather - that "straught, tall, old man, with a shining bell-pow, and reverend white locks hanging down about his haffets; a Roman nose, and two cheeks blooming through the winter of his long age like roses, when, poor body, he was sand-blind with infirmity".

"I recollect, as well as yesterday, that, on the Sundays, he wore a braid bannet with a red worsted cherry on the top of it; and had a single-breasted coat, square in the tails, of light Gilmerton blue, with plaited white buttons, bigger than crown pieces. His waistcoat was low in the neck, and had flap pouches, wherein he kept his mull for rappee, and his tobacco-box. To look at him, with his rig and fur Shetland hose pulled up over his knees, and his big glancing buckles in his shoon, sitting at our door-cheek, clean and tidy as he was kept, was just as if one of the ancient patriarchs had been left on earth, to let succeeding survivors witness a picture of hoary and venerable eld".¹⁾

1) The Life of Mansie Wauch - Tailor in Dalkeith, p. 6.

CHAPTER VIII - CONCLUSION

- I Contributions of the Petty Scots novel:- Gallery of types: decaying feudal families - the Laird or Highland chief: eccentric old Scotsmen and women: climbing Scots - provosts, merchants, nabobs: artisans: farmers: ministers.
- II Versatility in theme: conflict of Calvinism with older beliefs: pride of race: contrasts of Scottish and English characters: chronicles of manners and customs of a passing age. Sir Walter Scott's opinion on parochial fiction.
- III Versatility in method of narration: varying types of antobiography; use of epistolary method. Influence of the periodicals on the Petty Scots Novel in this connection and in others.
- IV Uses of the vernacular in the Petty Scots Novel.
- V Faults apparent in the Petty Scots Novel: artificial framework: insistent moral: lack of construction: lack of selection: limitation in scope: strengthening of native characteristics: deepening not widening.
- VI Influence of the Petty Scots Novel on subsequent Scottish writing. Gap between 1832-1888. Evolution of the kailyard School from Barrie - an admirer of Galt. Reaction to kailyard fiction begun by George Douglas Brown's "House with the Green Shutters" 1901 - also influenced /

influenced by Galt. Sombre school of Scottish writers perpetuates the realistic strain in "The Perry Scots Novel" Traits of the Petty Scots Novel in some of R.L.S.'s work: and in "Fiona Macleod's". Limitation of theme in modern Scots prose fiction. Minister and devil theme of The Petty Scots Novel still alive in the Tales of John Buchan and plays of James Bridie. Fascination of the Calvinist theme and sentimental antiquarianism draw writers to the past. The present is shown with ruthless squalor or with sentimentality. Balance must be struck.

CONCLUSION

What then in general are the main characteristics of the Petty Scots Novel and how far-reaching is its influence on subsequent Scottish writing?

The most valuable contribution given by this vernacular novel is the gallery of types, mostly Scottish, in which it specializes. There is firstly the decaying Laird or Highland chief, like Galt's Malachi Mailings in "The Last of the Lairds", or Glenroy in Susan Ferrier's "Destiny". The eccentric, crusty Spartan old Scotsmen and women are represented with almost terrifying realism in the persons of Mrs. Violet MacShake and Lady MacLaughlan in "Marriage", Uncle Adam in "The Inheritance" and Leddy Grippy in Galt's "The Entail". The men of affairs, usually rising from the humbler sphere, are Galt's Provost Pawkie of Gudetown, and Sir Andrew Wylie, the Scot-made-good. More daring in enterprise less Scottish in general characteristics are the Nabobs, some wealthy from trading in Virginia and the Plantations, others acquiring money and position in India. Miss Ferrier caricatures their yellow looks and sensitivity to cold in the person of Major Waddell, the uxorious husband of Miss Bell Black in "Marriage". Galt shows their business acumen and tendency to bad temper and severe gout in Mr. Cayenne (Annals of the Parish) Mr. Rupees, the modern business man, is the antagonist of the inactive laird Malachi Mailings in "The Last of the Lairds". A lively portrait of the growing artisan class is given in Moir's study of the nervous /

nervous Mansie Wauch, tailor of Dalkeith. Though the farming community is satirised in "The Cottagers of Glenburnie", James Hogg gives a realistic stalwart specimen of Border sheep-farmer in the person of Walter Laidlaw. Though Walter lives in the 17th century, the characteristics of the conservative farming community do not readily change, and the frankness and loyalty of the Borderer are no doubt perennial traits among the folk of his countryside. With him, go the studies of the two Covenanters, Ringan Gilhaize and the Brownie with their tenacity and courage. Best of all in this gallery are the ministers, the kind and comfortable Zachariah Pringle of "The Ayrshire Legatees" and that human saint, Micah Balwhidder. The figure of the minister Adam Blair stands apart from these for he is a tortured man, his Calvinistic conscience fearfully assailed by carnal temptations.

II

Versatility in Scottish theme is another attribute of this school of novels. A mixture of Calvinism and witchcraft is responsible for the strange theme of Adam Blair, and the gruesome theme of "The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner", where the arrogance of the elect delivers the victim up to the devil.

Another type of arrogance, pride of race, and of land, is treated in Susan Ferrier's "The Inheritance" and "Destiny" with the aristocratic families of Rossville and Glenroy, while the same pride is shown in a humbler sphere, ruining the domestic happiness of a family of Glasgow merchants, the small lairds of Walkinshaw /

Walkinshaw, in Galt's novel "The Entail".

The Petty Scots Novelists were certainly race-conscious and some themes are built entirely on contrasts of national character. In Susan Ferrier's "Marriage", the high-born English Lady Juliana is set against a rude Scottish background, while in Galt's, Sir Andrew Wylie, the reverse happens, and the homely Scot struts and postures in high London society. In a southern setting, the Scot is either shrewd and on the make like Sir Andrew Wylie, guileless like the Reverend Zachariah and Mrs. Pringle, or affected and constrained like Andrew Pringle.

One of the most important themes that the Petty Scots Novel offers, is the chronicling of the manners and customs of a passing age, mirroring the life of the small town and village. Sir Walter Scott, though in the main he passed this subject by, realised its human interest and suitability for the novel. "Ay, ay, if one could look into the heart of that little cluster of cottages no fear but you would find materials enow for tragedy as well as comedy. I undertake to say there is some real romance at this moment going on down there, that if it could have justice done to it, would be well worth all the fiction that was
1)
ever spun out of human brains".

In the introduction to "St. Ronan's Well", one of the novels in which he does set out to "give an imitation of the shifting /

1) The Life of Sir Walter Scott by John Gibson Lockhart,
Vol. IV, p. 114.

shifting manners of our own time"¹⁾, he pays tribute to some of the novelists who "seemed to have appropriated this province of the novel as exclusively their own"²⁾ like Maria Edgeworth, Jane Austen and Susan Ferrier. Elsewhere, as in the postscript to "Waverley", he praises Susan Ferrier and Elizabeth Hamilton for their domestic novels. The best, who wrote in this vein was of course, John Galt, with his pictures of progress expanding the fortunes of little 18th century Scots towns and villages, as in "The Provost" and "The Annals of the Parish".

III

As well as versatility in theme, the Petty Scots Novel shows versatility in method of narration. Because these Scottish writers specialized in character drawing, the autobiography is particularly suitable for conveying idiosyncrasy. By a cunning use of this method, John Galt in particular, allows his character to reveal himself unconsciously to the reader, as in "The Annals of the Parish" and "The Provost". This method is powerfully used by Lockhart in his study of the madman "Matthew Wald", and by Hogg with hideous effect in "The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner". The epistolary method of "The Ayrshire Legatees" is not so effective, but was probably best suited to the serial publication of this novel in Blackwood's Magazine.

Indeed /

1) Introduction to St. Ronan's Well, pp. vii-viii, (Nelson edition)

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Indeed the periodical papers like the Edinburgh Review and Blackwood's Magazine, with the opportunities they afforded for publication, their assembling of a compact reading public, and their stimulating, if sometimes startling criticisms, play an all-important part in the career of these Petty Scots Novels, as has been shown in this study, by the many references to reviews and publication of the novels. Though serial publication in these periodicals, may have helped to ruin the structure of plots, some of this injury done to them as works of art, is partly made up by the popularity which the different Magazines and Reviews of the time encouraged.

IV

Contemporary popularity was also largely due to the fact that the vernacular, sanctioned by use in Waverley, was in full swing. This language of the "saints" interspersed with the homely Scots gives a clue to the peculiar character of these petty Scots novels. It must also be remembered that the vernacular was often spoken by the professional classes at the time. How often, terse and vivid, does it bring the matter to heart in Sir Walter Scott's Journal and in Lockhart's "Life of Sir Walter Scott", and it was ever on the lips of old Edinburgh ladies like Susan Ferrier's Mrs. Violet MacShake. The Petty Scots Novelists use the vernacular with rare discretion; it imparts a patriarchal flavour to Micah's "Annals of the Parish"; in Ringan Gilhaize /

Gilhaize, it has the poetry of a Psalm of Revenge; in *The Confessions of a Justified Sinner* it is an incantation. The vernacular has many guises in these novels, sweet, sickly yet beautiful, heightening the pathos of martyrdom, or harsh and strident, sounding the greed of pelf.

V

Despite such powers the Petty Scots Novel has outstanding faults, which have been noted: in Mrs. Hamilton - the artificial framework of "*The Cottagers of Glenburnie*", and the all-insistent moral: in two of Susan Ferrier's novels, an organic flaw- lack of construction; with John Gibson Lockhart, one feels that the novels were tossed off; Hogg suffers from an ill-educated style and undisciplined mind - his story is often rambling and incoherent; John Galt lacked self-criticism, could not select and had no great respect for the literary calling; Moir is rough in his handwork, sentimental, and has a less sure grip of the vernacular. Above all, by its very nature the Petty Scots Novel is limited in scope; it deals with a small world, and chronicles minute changes.

In the main, these Petty Scots Novelists relied on their own peculiar gifts, but even when they borrowed from outside sources, they were merely strengthening certain persistent national characteristics. Before Mrs. Hamilton, with her "*Cottagers of Glenburnie*", (1808) there were English blue-stockings like Mrs. Inchbald, (1753-1821) ; Mrs. Opie (1769-1853); and /

and Miss Hannah More (1745-1833) who applied "schoolroom ethics"¹⁾ to their novels, but moralising came all too naturally to the Scots lady; who added however, by way of illustration, an original picture of Scots rural life. Miss Ferrier knew the novels of manners by Miss Burney and Miss Edgeworth, and the moralistic character sketches of La Bruyère, but like Mrs. Hamilton, she was by nature a severe critic of bad manners, and her eye was likewise caught by eccentrics on the Scottish scene. John Gibson Lockhart, by taste and education most likely to be influenced by the literature of other countries, reveals the same dependance on purely native forces. He knew German literature well; Goethe regarded him as a "young man of whom good things in literature, are to be expected",²⁾ and he himself responded to the demand for the weird tale and the terror novel, but in Adam Blair and in Matthew Wald, he was, after all, indulging in the Scots preoccupation with a morbid theme. In Adam Blair in particular, he was analysing the curious temperament of that most familiar Scots figure - a Calvinist minister. Lockhart was fascinated by the power of such a subject. He wrote in Blackwood's Magazine:- "The horrible is quite as legitimate a field of poetry and romance as either the pathetic or the ludicrous" --- "Nothing that is a part, a real essential part of human nature ever can be exhausted - and the region of fear and terror never will be so /

1) A Survey of English Literature (1780-1830) Oliver Elton, Vol. I, p. 180.

2) Correspondence between Goethe and Carlyle, edited by Charles Eliot Norton, p. 54.

so. Human flesh will creep to the end of time as the witches of Macbeth, exactly because to the end of time, it will creep¹⁾ in a midnight charnel vault".

After reading an opinion, couched in such terms, one is not surprised that Lockhart was naturally attracted to the study of diseased minds.

Hogg's talent was purely native; he borrowed nothing, but was drawn to depict a terror world of his own making, steeped in the atmosphere of Border and Calvinist tradition: his was a cruder but none the less powerful portrayal of an earlier Scots calvinist in "The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner".

Galt relied in the main on his own initiative, though he sometimes borrowed an idea from that earlier Scottish novelist, Tobias Smollett. He failed in his Scottish novels only, when he attempted to introduce the manners of contemporary English novels. Fortunately, this occurred rarely, but when it did, justified Miss Laetitia Landon's comment - "that he was like Antaeus,²⁾ never strong, except when he touched his mother earth".

Like Mrs. Hamilton and Miss Ferrier, Galt handled Scots character with a sure touch, and had the Scots gift of story-telling. As a contemporary said of him:- "Galt seemed to me by nature a male Scherazade. He had the gift of narrative so rare, so seemingly simple, but so inexplicably difficult, repartee is /

1) Blackwood's Magazine, Vol XVI, July 1824, p. 106.

2) Memoirs of a Literary Veteran by Mrs. K. Thomson, p. 99.

is nothing to it; the power of relating a story, without affectation, or weariness to your listener, is one above price".¹⁾

VI

No one then who has read these Scottish novels will deny their vitality, intensity and power. The chief trouble is that absorption in certain characteristics of The Petty Scots Novel has had a bad effect upon later writers who have even narrowed the confines of the world they have found. Pathos, poignantly used in the Petty Scots Novel, became sentimentalised, and racy character, stereotyped. Although the sentimentalising process had begun in "Mansie Wauch", general deterioration did not set in until about fifty years after the time of The Petty Scots Novel. In the period between the death of Sir Walter Scott in 1832 and the publication of Sir J.M. Barrie's "Auld Licht Idylls" in 1888, there were one or two Scottish novels that worthily perpetuated the strain of The Petty Scots Novel. Best among the dialect novels, and closest to Galt are Dr. William Alexander's sketches of humble Aberdeenshire life in Johnny Gibb of Gushetneuk and Life among my Ain Folk.

With the publication of Barrie's Auld Licht Idylls in 1888, there was a new development of the old themes of The Petty Scots Novel. Barrie had a great admiration for the Scottish /

1) Memoirs of a Literary Veteran, Mrs. K. Thomson, p. 103.

Scottish work of John Galt, as he informed Mr. B.A. Booth in a letter dated April 9th 1933,¹⁾ and certainly the raciness of dialect, and sure handling of Scots character in some of Barrie's sketches recall the previous master's touch. But there followed *A Window in Thrums* (1889), *The Little Minister* (1891), *Sentimental Tommy* (1896) and *Tommy and Grizel* (1900) - stereotyping not only Scots character, but Barrie's own art. Henceforth the Scot was all that was "canty and couthy and pawkie". Kindly ministers, shrewd elders, frugal farmers abound in these novels, and the lad o' pairts is also there; everyone means well, and the outcome is happy. This sentimental portrayal of Scottish life was popular and won the day. Through Barrie, the descent from Sir Andrew Wylie, was made inevitable.

In Barrie's wake, there followed the horde of the Kailyard School, as this sentimentalized novel type was described - S.R. Crockett with the *Stickit Minister and Other Sketches* (1893) and Ian MacLaren with *Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush* to mention only two. It is a long road, but a straight road from Gudetown through Thrums to the Drumquhat of Crockett and the Drumtochty of "MacLaren". Not only sentimentalizing but exaggeration appeared in this school of writers. Gone was Galt's discretion in incident and character. "Crockett, Ian MacLaren (John Watson) and several other followers of Barrie were ministers; their works reek of orthodoxy, prim decorum, and the whole hierarchy of Christian virtues. They were silent on the materialism /

1) *The Gathering of the West* by John Galt edited with an introductory essay and a glossary by Bradford Allen Booth, p. 26.

materialism and the healthy scepticism which observers have noted in the Scottish national character from Dunbar to Lewis Grassie Gibbon.¹⁾

Any danger from the possibility of the Kailyard School usurping the place of a national literature went in the year 1901, which saw the publication of George Douglas Brown's - "The House with the Green Shutters". - a brutal picture of a brutal society in a lowland Scottish town - Barbie. This time, Galt was the model for the leader of the school of reaction, and Brown makes reference to Galt by name several times throughout the course of the novel. In "The House with the Green Shutters", the colours are all dyed black. If the Petty Scots Novel furnished racy Scots types and sweet pastoral pictures to be sentimentalized by the Kailyard school the realism of Mrs. Hamilton, Miss Ferrier, and John Galt, and the power of Hogg and Lockhart appear reinforced in George Douglas Brown's novel, so that the Scottish scene is just as distorted on the dark side. Halfway between Thrums and Barbie lies Gudetown. "There is Galt's achievement. Few will deny that he alone gets at the truth about the Scott as he lives and moves in his native element".²⁾

Although Robert Louis Stevenson continues in the romantic tradition of Sir Walter Scott, he shows some of the characteristics of the Petty Scots Novelists, chiefly in his choice of weird themes in his short stories and in his magnificent use of the vernacular as in Thrawn Janet (1881) and Tod Lapraik appearing /

1) The Gathering of the West by John Galt edited by B.A. Booth
p. 27

2) The Gathering of the West by John Galt edited by B.A. BOOTH
p. 29.

appearing in *Catriona* (1893). The powerful figure of the hanging judge in *Weir of Hermiston* (1896), his terrified wife and sensitive boy, somehow recall certain aspects of Matthew Wald, and are a pointer to the situations in Brown's "House with the Green Shutters", and Dr. Cronin's - "Hatter's Castle". Throughout Stevenson's Scottish work, witches and warlocks, devils and tormented ministers and haunted moorlands bring back the atmosphere of Hogg and Lockhart's tales. John Buchan also can evoke the same uncanny atmosphere of a haunted piece of land, as he does in his early short stories - "The Moon Endureth" and "The Watcher by the Threshold". As he writes in the dedication of the latter book. "It is of the back-world of Scotland that I write, the land behind the mist and over the seven bens".

Another who delved after the weird in a Celtic atmosphere was William Sharp (1856-1905) author of *Pharais* (1894) *The Mountain Lovers* (1895) *The Sin Eater* (1895) and *The Washer of the Ford* (1896). *The Sin Eater* has been mentioned in connection with the novels of Hogg and Lockhart. Apart from a poetic treatment of scenery, and an interest in the psychological approach to character, "Fiona Macleod" evokes the same unpleasant atmosphere as is suggested in Hogg's "Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner".

Since then there seemed to be an efflorescence of new Scottish fiction, but on examination it proved to be only a continuation in old modes. The Scott-Stevenson romance lingered on in the pages of Neil Munro, and John Buchan and R.B. Cunningham Graham /

Graham. The Kailyarders although much subdued, still write parochial fiction, as R.W. McKenna, O Douglas, David Storrar Meldrum, J.J. Bell and the Misses Findlater, while the sombre realistic school, traceable also to the "The Petty Scots Novel" was to be found in the novels of J. Macdougall Hay, Lennox Kerr, and Dr. Cronin. Greater artists were Neil Gunn, George Blake, and Lewis Grassie Gibbon, in whose trilogy *Sunset Song*, *Grey Granite* and *Cloud Howe*, though there is much squalor depicted, there is also a surprising lyric note.

Thus it can be seen that the Petty Scots Novel is responsible for two distinct traditions in Modern Scottish fiction - the portrayal of parochial life with quaint characters and racy dialogue, and the depicting of sterner scenes and analysing of queer character.. Galt himself might have composed endless novels from the first of those themes, had he cared, for he had in full measure "the power of discerning the things which can fittest be assimilated"¹⁾. As a writer, he presented old material in a new way, but all authors are not gifted with Galt's artistry. Hence there is exaggerated sentimentality on one side, and exaggerated squalor on the other. It is no wonder that Scottish literature goes in vicious circles, and that modern critics shake their heads over its limitations. What Mr. Ivor Brown in an article entitled "Caledonia Stern and Mild", calls "the queer complexity of Scotland"²⁾ is no doubt due to a cleavage in race, which is not present to the same extent in England - the Gael and the Norseman - the dreamer and the realist.

Whether /

1) The Literary Life by John Galt, Vol.I. p. 146.

2) The Observer - August 1st 1943.

Whether that be so or not, the Minister and the Devil still fight on in an unresolved conflict in Scottish literature. In Scotland the Church has always loomed large in the everyday life of the folk; the manse is the nucleus of small communities. Lockhart was a son of the manse and so was Buchan. Crockett and Ian Maclaren were both ministers, and as has been said, present the happy sentimentalised picture of village life; their creations are at peace, and good at heart and are not troubled by elemental conflicts. But Adam Blair and Buchan's minister in his novel *Witch Wood*, wrestle with the same evil force. Buchan writes of this novel as follows:- "Just as certain old houses, like the inns at Burford and Queensferry, cried out to Robert Louis Stevenson to tell their tales, so I felt the clamour of certain scenes for an interpreter.

The best, I think, is *Witch Wood*, in which I wrote of the Tweedside parish of my youth at the time when the old Wood of Caledon had not wholly disappeared, and when the rigours of the new Calvinism were contending with the ancient secret rites of Diana. I believe that my picture is historically true, and I could have documented almost every sentence from my researches on Montrose¹⁾".

The doctors too are drawn to analytical studies. Dr. Cronin and Dr. Mavor (James Bridie) are treading the same circle. Cronin's "*Hatter's Castle*" is Barbie in new setting; Brodie, a second Gourlay, draws his sensitive shrinking family to agony and death.

Dr. /

1) Memory Hold-the-Door - by John Buchan, p. 196.

Dr. Mavor is still drawn to the mysteries of Calvinism and witchcraft in his plays. The devil still enters the Manse of the Auld Kirk, no longer as a grim, black "tyke" but bland and urbane. Still it ends, as in "The Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner," as in Buchan's tale of "The Watcher by the Threshold" with a wild chase over the moors, in the play of "Mr. Bolfry" (1943)

It seems as if we had never made up our mind about our religion; the old bogles as well as the old dogmas haunt us and we love our servitude; we return to the past in sentimental antiquarian mood.

It may be that, after the Waverley Novels and the Petty Scots Novels had been written, the rigours of the mid-nineteenth century Evangelical revival clamped creative effort, and we are only now recovering from that long and sterile period. Over the gap of those fifty odd years between 1832 and 1888, our writers looked with quickened interest at the last great creative period, and found historical romance, parochial fiction and certain weird and horrific themes. These were eagerly taken up again, but something of the old vitality had gone; Scottish writers were working in pastiche and the vernacular embalmed and kept alive what was a worn-out tradition.

Mr. Ivor Brown talks of "putting Scotland in proportion with its head among the peaks and its feet on the well-famed clay"¹⁾. The salvation for Scotland, he seems to suggest, is a /

1) Article entitled - "Caledonia Stern and Mild" review of Scottish Short Stories edited by T. and J.F. Hendry (Penguin) The Observer - August 1st, 1943.

a return to the land in literature, and perhaps in life, a consciousness of the scene. That would show sanity and balanced outlook, a return to the viewpoint of Sir Walter Scott, for he was the first to present the land, not merely as a casual back-cloth, but as a necessary and beautiful element in his Scottish novels.

Maybe after the present war is over, the balance will be restored, and new themes breathe fresh life into our Scottish prose fiction. At any rate, we must make a clean break with the themes of The Petty Scots Novel, which, though worked out with power and precision by their authors, after all, mirrored an age that was already passing.

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